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Paradigms Lost and Re-membered: The Case of the Japanese Canadian Experience in Canadian Media, Cinema, and Literature

by

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Abstract

This dissertation is a diachronic examination of the mediatic representations of Japanese Canadian experiences from 1877 to the present.

Japanese Canadians were classified, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as "Yellow Peril;" later, their marginalized status was compounded by their displacement away from the Canadian West Coast in 1942, and the diaspora of Japanese Canadians east of the Rockies or to Japan, at the end of the war. This dissertation focuses on the dialogue and the tension between narratives of the sub-altern (predominantly Japanese Canadian women writers and filmmakers), and the dominant discourse (a series of power relations), as encompassed within the parameters of critical reception. This study is in dialogue with the academic discourse on Japanese Canadian texts by Guy Beauregard, King-Kok Cheung, Scott McFarlane, and Roy Miki, to name a few. The primary texts drawn from media, film, and literature are examined in relationship to one another and to the changing socio-political climate of the nation over the last 130 years. These comparisons demonstrate how Japanese Canadians have negotiated changing identities in relationship to government policies and legislation, as well as their corresponding social values, while indicating the degree of belonging permitted minority ethno-cultural citizens in a Multicultural Canadian nation.

The conclusions of this dissertation go beyond Japanese Canadian narrations of identity and can be applied to the experiences and narrations of other ethno-cultural groups who have suffered or are suffering discrimination as a result of biased government legislation, which includes, for example the Chinese Head Tax, and the

reservation and residential school systems that filtered members of the First Nations. This would also encompass, most obviously, other communities who were subject to wartime internment, such as Ukrainian (Austro-Hungarian) Canadians during the First World War, as well as German Canadians and Italian Canadians during the Second World War. Examining the cultural texts motivated by past prejudicial policy, legislation, and social reaction also provides insight into contemporary cinema and literature produced in reaction to political legislations post-September 11, and it highlights some of the challenges Canada faces as a nation that identifies and upholds difference through the federal policy of Multiculturalism.

To my family and friends

for your love and understanding

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INTRODUCTION

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari argue in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* that all minor writing is necessarily political, and that everything in minor literature "takes on a collective value. . . .what each author says individually already constitutes a common action, and what he or she says or does is necessarily political, even if others aren't in agreement" (17). This is an accurate assertion in relationship to the literary and cinematic representations of human rights abuses in Canada by minor writers, identified in this thesis by the theoretical term ethno-cultural. In the general framework of Blodgett, and Anselmi and Gouliamos, what prevails is the relationship between the major, or the dominant framework (in terms of textual production, the canonized), and what are considered subaltern, marginal, minority, or ethno-cultural discourses. Specifically discussed in this thesis, is that Japanese Canadian narrations of *evacuation* are political in that they are in dialogue with the politics of the narration (cinematic, mediatic, and literary) of those same wartime events written and produced by the dominant discourse. Using this as a starting point, I will frame my critical discourse as suggested in the works of E.D. Blodgett, and William Anselmi and Kosta Gouliamos, in terms of the tension created by the general framework of subaltern literatures in Canada, while at the same time eliciting from the artistic texts analyzed a more stringent engagement based on the fact that artistic texts come with their own frameworks implicitly or explicitly suggested and ideologically bound. All texts, including those on Japanese Canadian history and evacuation, provide clues as to how the text should be approached within its ideological boundaries. *Evacuation* is a complex term that was first coined by the Canadian government during the Second

World War. Roy Miki, in his book *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*, explains the nuances of this word:

> "Evacuation," the euphemism coined by the government, became the term used to describe the internment of Japanese Canadians. It took root so deeply that to this day many Japanese Canadians invoke the term, not merely to denote the event itself, but also to identify the weight of all its phases – dispossession, deportation, dispersal and assimilation. "Evacuation" in its singularity has taken on the proportions of myth for them, embodying that circumscribed period when each person of "the Japanese race" was subject to the violation of rights without recourse to protective mechanisms. "Evacuation" has come to exemplify the whole Japanese Canadian experience of the 1940s, from the moment of uprooting following Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 to the final lifting of restrictions on April 1, 1949. "Evacuation" strikes the chord of shared "exile" from the coast. (50)

In this thesis the term *evacuation* will be used in order to refer to the entirety of the wartime experience that included relocation, internment, dispossession, deportation, and dispersal.

This study focuses on the literary and cinematic representations of human rights abuses in Canada, and, specifically, how Japanese Canadian history is narrated within the paradigm of state-multiculturalism (Multiculturalism). Throughout this dissertation, the term "Multiculturalism" with a capital "M" signifies federal state-multiculturalism, as opposed to "multiculturalism" with a small "m," which signifies the lived experience of practical multiculturalism in everyday life, since colonialization and the influx of immigration to Canada. In its practical application, Multiculturalism – contrary to its theoretical definition – ensures the maintenance of power hierarchies established at the time of colonial expansionism. The rhetoric of power elites necessarily filters down to the population through the discourses of politics and legislation, their circulation in society, and how they are reported by the media. Therefore, the discourses of power dominate the socio-political reality in terms of the way legislation forms Canadian community, and at the level of media parlance, which impacts how the mainstream majority who have access to power, define themselves, their position within the nation, and thereby the nation itself. The discourses of power in the different eras are what I term in this dissertation to be the dominant discourse.[1] It is important to note that while the discourses of power – social, political, and cultural – change over time based on the specific politics of the different periods, and while early twentieth century politics are openly racist as opposed to the adoption of vocabulary of more tolerant politics by the 1970s, the power structures of the nation are ever concerned with maintaining power for those included in the state's social, cultural, and political governance, which necessitates exclusion for other factions of the population. Of course, within all groups, heterogeneity of opinion exists, as will become clear in the first chapter on history. During the pre-Second-World-War and wartime periods there were voices within the power hierarchies that spoke out against the racism and abuses of power that eventually became legislation. However, the rhetoric of those power elites, such as Thomas Reid, A.W. Neill, Ian Mackenzie, and Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, who were capable of getting legislation passed against Japanese immigration and for *evacuation,* became the dominant discourse of the nation in those time periods. By the 1970s the dominant discourse became synonymous with the rhetoric of Trudeau's Liberal government, which promoted Multiculturalism as the solution to future prejudice, racism, and inequality, in a manner that allowed that contemporary government to confess past state transgressions and absolve the contemporary government and society of guilt. The literary and cinematic texts of the dominant discourse in the post- Multiculturalism Policy era (post-1971) identify Japanese Canadians as model minority citizens who survived adversity, and the narratives draw attention to the racism of the Canadian nation's early governments, in order to announce a contrast between historical abuses of power and post-1970s benevolence. Nevertheless, the preservation of a power hierarchy is possible even after the Multiculturalism Policy of 1971 and the Multiculturalism Act of 1988, because under Multiculturalism ethno-cultural communities define the margins. In the 1980s, redress placed Japanese Canadians in conflict with the Canadian government as they fought for redress in the form of an apology and monetary compensation. This new adversarial relationship between Japanese Canadians and the state produces narratives by Japanese Canadians that confirm the atrocities of historical governments and refute the government's position that Multiculturalism has resolved the residual polemics of the *post-inter(n)ment* era. When the government agrees to a redress settlement with Japanese Canadians, it creates a crisis of identity for Japanese Canadians who are no longer struggling against the state, but who are being recuperated by narratives of the dominant discourse, which reintegrate Japanese Canadians in the Canadian socio-scape as model minority citizens and exemplary survivors of the pre-Multicultural era, much like the narratives of the 1970s had done. It is not until the mid- to late-1990s that Japanese Canadian writers and filmmakers begin to rewrite Japanese Canadian identity and the events of re-membering[2] history from a *post-inter(n)ment* position. The word "re-member" is hyphenated throughout the dissertation to emphasize the idea of bringing back the past, and also of reconstituting a community and reformulating a Japanese Canadian identity. This term contains both the idea of recalling, which is a silent endeavour, and the process of gathering the "members" together around a past that was silenced. In all periods, however, the narrations by Japanese Canadians are in dialogue with the dominant discourse. Sometime they resist the dominant discourse and at other times they take on the paradigms of the dominant discourse (as discussed in Chapter Four). However, each Japanese Canadian narrative becomes part of a collective autobiography that re-members history and community. Those narratives that assert their domination through popular reception and have an impact throughout the social structure become paradigms for the narration of identity in their specific eras.

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[1] "Dominant discourse" is a term used in *Elusive Margins*, by William Anselmi and Kosta Gouliamos. There are dominant discourses (plural) – English and French – which I have reduced to "dominant discourse" since the purpose of this work is a concern with the recuperation and marginalization of ethnic minority discourses, which seem to result in the same processes of marginalization, containment, and recuperation.

As part of the dominant discourse myself, not only as an academic, but as part of the white mainstream of Canada, I acknowledge that ethnic Canadians fought hard for the adoption of Multiculturalism, and were optimistic about the access to power that it would allow. Multiculturalism does have some obvious positive outcomes, including the fact that without Canada Arts Council support, many of the texts analyzed in this dissertation would never have been published or produced, and there would be no space in academia for ethno-cultural studies. Multiculturalism also became the avenue through which Japanese Canadians were able to pursue the issue of redress, and while redress might still have been possible through the Department of Justice, in the absence of a Multiculturalism portfolio, that remains hypothetical. I also acknowledge that many of the failings of Multiculturalism existed in Canada before the policy and act of 1971 and 1988 respectively, and that racist practices go on in countries around the world that do not practice Multiculturalism. Nevertheless, it is also viable to point out the failings of Multiculturalism, primarily as it functions at the cultural level of text production: literary, cinematic, and mediatic. My intellectual formation begins with 1970s discussions of Multiculturalism, and during the 1980s and early 1990s I was in an education system that propagated the benefits of Multiculturalism and denied the existence of discrimination, prejudice, and racism. The limited access to power permitted to ethno-cultural citizens (and I choose the word "permitted" intentionally to indicate that the power-structures of the nation were not disrupted by the Multiculturalism Policy of 1971) thirty-five years ago was considered progress; it has allowed for some social transformation. However, Canada is regarded internationally as a model for Multiculturalism. This thesis proposes no permanent solutions to the problems of Multiculturalism, but it will, hopefully, illustrate the limitations of Multiculturalism that maintain the power-hierarchies of the dominant discourse over time, which result in the continuing exclusion of the Other.

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[2] When "re-membering" is in italics, it refers to the period of Japanese Canadian history, starting in the 1970s, that I have termed *re-membering*.

The specific case study for this thesis is the representation of the human rights abuses inflicted on Japanese Canadians, focusing predominantly on the narrations of Japanese Canadian history that have been produced since the Second World War. There were no literary or cinematic texts previous to the end of the war, and the media representations from that time period are limited and covered in the historical overview in the first chapter. This thesis focuses on how government legislations and their repercussions have been represented by the dominant discourse and by Japanese Canadians over the last approximately sixty years, between 1945 and 2006. Many of the primary texts focus on remembering of family histories that were not discussed after the Second World War, because of the shame associated with the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* from the West Coast. In contrast to the simplified narrative created for media sound bites during the redress era, a tactical decision made to accomplish a specific political goal, the literary, cinematic, and media texts produced by certain Japanese Canadian writers and filmmakers expose the complicated processes of unknowingly living with the residual effects of political traumas, only to rediscover family histories that were buried for several decades after the war. Documenting the difficult process of re-membering history and community is and intrinsic element of rewriting the history of early immigration to Canada, and the events of the Second-World-War *evacuation* from the West Coast. The narration of these human rights abuses, specifically the Second-World-War legislation, by the dominant discourse and Japanese Canadians (women writers and filmmakers, in particular), provides insight into the limitations of, and possibilities for resistance within the paradigm of Multiculturalism. My primary texts are drawn from the literary and cinematic productions that reference the events and/or lasting resonances of the Canadian government's treatment of Japanese Canadians. Texts drawn from Japanese Canadian and mainstream literature and film will be analyzed and compared predominantly in relationship to the historical context of their production, but also in relationship to one another over time. In certain instance, particularly influential texts will be discussed in terms of their continuing impact decades after the historical context of their production. The primary texts include the following: -- *of Japanese Descent: An Interim Report* (1945),[3] "Exodus of the Japanese"(1973), *Enemy Alien* (1975), Canada Vignettes: The Dentist (1978), *Obasan* (1981), *The Displaced View* (1988), *Mrs. Murakami – Family Album* (1991), "Walk-In Closet" (1993), *The Last Harvest* (1994), *The War Between Us* (1995), *Watari Dori* (1997), *The Electrical Field* (1998), *The Travelling Reverend* (2000), *Obāchan's Garden* (2001), *One Hundred Million Hearts* (2004), and *Kimiko Murakami: Triumph Over Internment* (2005). These primary sources come from a variety of genres: historical novels (prose fiction), television episodes, documentary films, and feature films. The primary texts for each period have been chosen based on the breadth of their reception and impact, as well as on their political platforms, whether they are exemplary of Japanese Canadian narrations of innovation or propagate the Multicultural agenda.

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[3] The particular semantic reference to the 1945 NFB propaganda film is referred to in this dissertation by its accurate title -- *of Japanese Descent: An Interim Report*. The standard reference to the title is usually *Of Japanese Descent*, which does not recognize the "-- " and therefore eliminates the silenced missing component of the title. The perplexing double hyphen produces a displacing effect for the reader, since it characterizes Japanese Canadians and their experiences during the Second-World-War by insinuating much but declaring very little, which is typical of propaganda that enforces without encompassing.

The family and community autobiographical novels and the films by Japanese Canadian writers and filmmakers play to greater and lesser degrees with the notions of fiction and non-fiction, blurring the boundaries between the two. Often woven into these texts is the use of historical documents and photographs. In this way, Japanese Canadian literature incorporates elements of the documentary style, what Manina Jones labels documentary-collage or what Linda Hutcheon calls historiographical metafiction. This reliance on documentary techniques in Japanese Canadian literature leads naturally to the production of documentary films in the 1990s, when affordable technology makes this medium financially viable. Whether textual or cinematic, documentary style writing and cinematography is central to the corpus of Japanese Canadian texts, which are predominantly attempting to create (re-member) family and community histories in response to the fact that the lack of discussion about wartime events in the post-war years created a void whereby family stories needed to be re-collected and re-membered.

Many texts narrate the author's or filmmaker's family journey since their arrival in Canada. These personal genealogies and the search for identity narrate a sense of self for Japanese Canadians whose families were subjected to internment. A unifying discourse was certainly the goal as the community fought for redress. However, in a diverse community, one narration cannot be all encompassing (in the way that *Obasan*, for example, has been held up as the ultimate text on *evacuation*). In the case of some texts, the narrations become an imposition of Japanese Canadian identity and experience such that they merely perpetuate notions of Japanese Canadians as either model minority citizens who risk assimilation or as the Other that lives outside the boundaries of mainstream society. These narratives serve the Multicultural purpose of maintaining the white-Canadian identity, wherein all ethno-cultural identities are collapsed in the socio-political and economic peripheries of the nation.

Of significant interest both thematically and theoretically is the fact that a predominant number of Japanese Canadian authors and directors are women. The protagonists commonly outline a sense of self based on a matrilineal history. Typically, these women writers and directors narrate strong female characters—grandmothers, aunts, and mothers—thus providing a genealogy of experience.[4] Clearly, these individual stories are theoretically significant, not only because they formulate a community identity, but also because they create Japanese Canadian heroines and heroes. This is especially significant in an era when many young Japanese Canadians are the progeny of mixed marriages. Their Japanese ancestry is a visible part of their physical identity, but until recent history, has been invisible in terms of a cultural or social sense of self/pride within the Canadian context.

Funding is also a political issue, and in the *redress* and *post-redress periods,* literature and film often received funding from Japanese Canadian organizations and the federal government. This has had a notable impact on the types of narratives that are most easily accessible to the Canadian public. The narratives published and produced by the larger book publishers and film boards have a wider distribution and impact. Therefore, creating innovative texts is only one component influencing

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[4] There are, of course, exceptions not dealt with in this thesis. One male Japanese Canadian documentary filmmaker is Michael Fukushima, who looks to the patriarchy of his family to situate himself within the Canadian context. Mieko Ouchi does an investigation of her identity in relationship to her parents: her Japanese Canadian father, and Anglo Canadian mother. Roy Kiyooka's family story *Mothertalk*, focuses on his mother's version of history.

Japanese Canadian narratives of identity and history. Equally important is the accessibility of those innovative texts to the general public and the critical reception that surrounds those texts, both of which play into the interest in and availability of those texts. The availability of texts was always part of my decision to include any primary source in this analysis, because the possibility to access the sources is not only a requirement for me to study and analyze them, but accessibility also plays a role in the texts' ability to participate in an ongoing dialogue and to influence the public. In the 1980s, Japanese Canadians were redefining and rewriting themselves into the narrative of a Multicultural Canada in response to narratives of the dominant discourse, of which Pierre Berton's "Exodus of the Japanese" and the National Film Board's *Enemy Alien* are indicative of such a process. The titles of these texts alone highlight some of the problems of identity narration. In 1970, Pierre Berton refers to Japanese Canadians as "Japanese." This was typical for the time period, but it reveals much about the lack of acceptance the "Japanese" faced even as sansei and yonsei. "Enemy Alien," as a term, is equally problematic; it maintains the use of wartime ideology forty years after the end of the Second World War. Thus, they were *included* as marginalized citizens. This was acceptable to the government of the day, which promoted Multiculturalism, and a public that had yet to see the marginalizing effects included in the policy. As a more critical stance on Multiculturalism has been formulated, some Japanese Canadian literature and cinema hint at these same criticisms through art. However, the government institutions and the Japanese Canadian organizations that control funding have consistently supported projects that are conservative in their criticism of Canadian Multiculturalism. The narration of the community has been highly regulated both in its mission to achieve redress and in the *post-redress* period, when redress funds were used in support of certain community projects and not others. One polemic of Japanese Canadian narration is that certain narratives receive funding while other voices are silenced. Funding is more accessible if the project of the narrative seems supportive of Multicultural ideology and maintains the formulaic identity narration of survival in the face of adversity. Nevertheless, certain excellent authors and filmmakers such as Joy Kogawa in *Obasan*, Midi Onodera in *The Displaced View*, Linda Ohama in *Obāchan's Garden*, and Kerri Sakamoto in her short stories, novels, and films have been able to produce innovative works that demonstrate aesthetic and philosophical value.[5] Their works also illustrate a plurality of political attitudes that come from the diversity of Japanese Canadian views. Kogawa was innovative within the context of *Obasan*'s publication, but the polyphonic messages of that text were in large part recuperated by the criticism generated around that text. Midi Onodera also adds to the Japanese Canadian narrative by allowing her issei[6] grandmother to speak for herself using her own language—Japanese—without the mediation of translation. In this way *The Displaced View* also alienates the viewer and allows them to experience the Japanese Canadian sansei narrator's desire to more clearly understand the grandmother by transcending the linguistic and cultural divides. Almost twenty years later, Kerri

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[5] There are a few other innovative Japanese Canadian writers and filmmakers whose works have not been explored in-depth in this thesis because their work fell outside the parameters used to choose primary works for this dissertation. These writers, to name a few, include Hiromi Goto, Roy Miki (as a creative not critical writer), Roy Kiyooka, Sally Ito, and Mieko Ouchi.

[6] "Issei" refers to first generation Japanese Canadian immigrants. "Nisei" refers to second generation Japanese Canadians. "Sansei" is third generation; "yonsei" is fourth generation, etc. These words will not be identified by italics—the standard notation for foreign words in MLA style—because they all belong to the Japanese Canadian lexicon (i.e. they are not foreign words).

Sakamoto and Linda Ohama bring new formulations to literature and film. In *The Electrical Field,* Sakatmoto reconsiders the cyclical trap of trauma, and in *One Hundred Million Hearts,* she complicates the wartime community by creating Japanese Canadian characters who explore the Japanese part of their identities. Fittingly, the book ends with Masao deciding he is Canadian, and Buddy deciding he wants to be Japanese.

Japanese Canadians live in the geo-political space called Canada, yet their identity within that space is ever shifting. Pre-Second-World-War Japanese Canadians struggled for identity recognition through citizenship. However, they remained marginalized due to government policy, legislation, propaganda, and prohibitive social reaction.[7] During the war, Japanese Canadians not only remained subject to these forces, but these forces were institutionalized in the form of the internment. Japanese Canadians had long been seen as Other and outsiders within Canada, but media-prompted[8] fear alienated them further with the labels of Fifth

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[7] In 1936 a delegation from the Japanese Canadian Citizens League went to Ottawa to demand the vote. However, they were unsuccessful because negative public sentiment was running high and the government did not act against the public outcry. The Asiatic Exclusion League was gaining strength, and Japanese communities in Vancouver had been attacked and vandalized. Their homes and businesses were damaged and, in some cases, destroyed. Later, Japanese men who tried to enlist in the war were turned down. Following that, Japanese fishermen living on the coast were labeled "Enemy Alien" and had to live under the watchful eye of their neighbours who suspected them of being spies and saboteurs. Tensions increased as the media-fed community sentiment and government legislation seemed to confirm the suspicions about the Japanese living in Canada. The government eventually imposed a curfew on all Japanese Canadians, restricting their movement, and ultimately they were rounded up and their property was confiscated.

[8] According to Sunahara in her book *The Politics of Racism*, the Canadian press in December of 1941 (after the bombing of Pearl Harbour) was generally more restrained than their American counterpart. The British Columbia press avoided direct discussion of internment, confining their focus to whether the Japanese should have their fishing licenses revoked. The newspapers generally supported the demands of the United Federal Fishermen's Union that favored the expulsion of the Japanese from the fishing industry. The call for expulsion was motivated by the financial benefits that would ensue if a significant portion of their business competition were eliminated. However, Canadians were highly influenced by the American media. When American papers reported Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox's erroneous remarks linking Pearl Harbour with 'fifth column' activity, the attitudes expressed in Canadian newspapers reflected greater negative sentiment towards the Japanese Canadians:

Columnists and Enemy Alien. After the Second World War, Japanese Canadian identity remained unstable because of the community's internalized feelings of shame about the internment as well as public opinion. Together, these factors allowed the dominant discourse to formulate the community's reputation and image. Notably, the representations of *evacuation* are informed by the varying political climate of the nation over time, and the differing representations are a response to the politics contemporary to the various texts and their eras of production. The literature and film on *evacuation* produced by Japanese Canadian authors and filmmakers since the 1980s are a reaction to, and a renegotiation of, particular stereotypes. Thus, Japanese Canadian narrations represent a symbolic attempt to manage and renegotiate their own identity. These stories create a dialogue with and against the dominant narrative of Canadian identity and nation.

The representation of Japanese Canadian identity changes over time, and can be classified as *immigration* (issei), *dangerous alien/ internment* (Second World War), *silence & forgetting* (late 1940s to mid-1970s), *re-membering* (1970s), *redress* (1980s), and *post-redress* (after September 22, 1988).[9] The Japanese Canadian identity in all of these periods is polyphonic in that there is a plurality of views within and outside the Japanese Canadian community. Examples of divisions within the

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> Typical of the ensuing articles was the Vancouver *Sun*'s December 16 [1941] editorial that warned that the fate of Japanese Canadians would depend on their own conduct and that, at the slightest evidence of sabotage or lack of cooperation, British Columbia's Japanese should be interned. . . .[However, exercising caution] demands for the internment of all or part of the minority were confined almost exclusively to the often unsigned letters-to-the-editor. (Sunahara 30)

[9] "Among other things, the settlement contained the following provisions: a government acknowledgement of the injustice done to Japanese Canadians during the Second World War; a $21,000 payment to each survivor; $12 million to the Japanese Canadian community, to be administered by the NAJC, for educational, social, and cultural activities and programs; and $24 million for a jointly funded Canadian Race Relations Foundation to foster racial harmony and help fight racism. We hoped that the terms of our settlement would help to ensure that other groups in Canada would not have to relive our history" (Omatsu 19-20).

Japanese Canadian community are drawn according to religious affiliations (Buddhist or Christian), *ken*-ties (loyalties to community members who immigrated from the same *ken*, i.e. prefectural heimat, in Japan), generational divisions (issei, nisei, sansei, etc.[10]), gender[11], regional affiliations and community membership within Canada[12], political and ideological beliefs.

Texts about Japanese Canadian identity have been authored both by the dominant discourse and Japanese Canadians, presenting both positive and negative images and narrative, and the interaction thereof. Each of the texts that I examine is a product of its era and its corresponding social, political, and cultural climate. The Japanese Canadian identity is intertwined with that of the contemporary dominant identity and ideology, and both are in a constant state of flux, writing and rewriting themselves, negotiating and renegotiating the balance of power, redress being merely one actualization of that process.

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[10] This generational division (first, second, third generation) becomes even more convoluted when one considers that dependent on the time of family immigration, a nisei and a sansei might be of different immigrant generations, yet be of the same age. Therefore, a nisei and sansei might share certain commonalities based on their age and their experiences as Canadians. However, their viewpoints might differ because of the family history and proximity to Japan, Japanese language and culture. For example, a family who emigrated from Japan in 1900 will remember a Meiji Japan (1868-1912) and will be living with modified values and traditions from that time. Meanwhile, on the same street another Japanese family, who emigrated in 1920 will remember a Taishō Japan: 1912-1926. "The Taishō era was a period during which such concepts as individual rights, freedom, and democracy flourished in the intellectual and cultural realms. The Taishō intellectuals were not burdened with the task of 'enriching and strengthening' the nation as were their predecessors in the Meiji era" (Hane, 220). This had an impact on the mentality of Japanese Canadian immigrants, based on which Japan they came from: Meiji, Taisho or later periods.

[11] Shirley Geok-lin Lim, in her article "Japanese American Women's Life Stories: Maternality in Monica Sone's `Nisei Daughter' and Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*" writes the following:

> Asian American writers and scholars are indebted to the editors of *AIIIEEEEE! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*, who in 1975 drafted an uncompromising attack on mainstream American literary criteria and in the process introduced a generation of readers to an ethnic literature that until then was relatively unknown or believed inconsequential. Enabling an understanding of the force and value of Asian American writing, Frank Chin, Jeffrey Paul Chan, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Shawn Hsu Wong countered the stereotype of Asian American docility with their own version of Asian American empowerment. In doing so, unfortunately, they moved from ethnic to gender stereotypes and situated their approach in an explicitly masculinist position. (Lim 289)

[12] In 1980, "representatives from fifteen centers elected a new president [of the NAJC National Association of Japanese Canadians], nisei Gordon Kadota, a member of a respected Vancouver family and a successful businessman. Kadota, fluently bilingual (in Japanese and English), was able to bridge the language gap with the issei, something none of the sansei leadership was later able to do. Still, the community's political old guard continued to be represented by men such as George Imai, a nisei Toronto school teacher with close ties to the Liberal Party. . . .Imai continued to act autocratically in what he thought was the community's best interests. Indeed, without the knowledge or authorization of the NAJC Imai had for years been holding behind-the-scenes discussions with government politicians such as Toronto M.P. David Colenette, the Liberal Minister of Multiculturalism under Trudeau" (Omatsu 96). The community was so divided that there were times when a redress campaign was almost made impossible.

a) Framework and Organizing Principles

The organizing principle of this dissertation will be diachronic, positioning the literary and cinematic texts as a phenomenon of the historical and temporal Canadian contexts. In terms of a general division of focus, I have grouped the historical moments into two broader eras in the formulation of Japanese Canadian identity: the *pre-story* era, and the *post-inter(n)ment.* The division of Japanese Canadian history into historical moments is an artificial construct meant to provide an organizing principle for the thesis. As such, the divisions between them are malleable and prone to overlap. The period of *pre-story* defines the period before there were any Japanese Canadian literary or cinematic narratives available to the general public. The *post-inter(n)ment* era begins with the silence in the 1950s and 60s, disrupted only by government propaganda, and includes the periods of *re-membering* (1970s) *redress* (1980s) and *post-redress* (after September 22, 1988), since in those periods literary and cinematic works about Japanese Canadian history produced by members of the dominant discourse and from the perspectives of Japanese Canadians are available to the general public.

Chapter One gives a summary of Japanese Canadian history between 1877 and the end of the redress movement in 1988. In this historical period, any narration of the "Japanese" in Canada was confined to "Japanese"-run newspapers. There were only sporadic and negative mentions of Japanese Canadians in mainstream news publications, mostly discussing the problem of the "Yellow Peril,"[13] which received the most attention at election times when specific politicians ran for office on anti-Asian platforms. This first chapter addresses the reciprocal relationship between the media and government: at times, the media reports political decisions and legislations, and at other times it has a direct impact upon them. This history of the *pre-story* era, however, provides the background necessary to explain how the public discourse had been consistently prejudiced, with *evacuation* marking not an aberration, but the climax and legislation of racist attitudes. While aware of the biases inherent in any narration, including that of history, this chapter intends to provide an historical perspective on the events of Japanese Canadian history between 1877 and 1988, evinced from historical sources, in order to situate the more personal and familial narratives of the primary texts, which add a rich layer to the community narrative, when understood in context.

Chapter Two begins *post-inter(n)ment*, which is encompasses several periods. Before the end of the Second World War there were no literary or cinematic narratives of Japanese Canadians. The category of *post-inter(n)ment* has been devised to draw attention to the fact that not only were Japanese Canadians relocated away from the West Coast and many of them interned as an act of control and confinement, but the post-war nation-building discourse of the government also buried—interred—any discussion of the wartime abuses of power enacted on

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[13] This was one of the derogatory historical terms used to refer to Japanese Canadians and to all Asians until the mid-twentieth century.

Japanese Canadians. The first narrative was the 1945 propaganda film -- *of Japanese Descent: An Interim Report*, produced by the NFB to control public reaction to the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* In this chapter, -- *of Japanese Descent*, is analyzed in relationship to the 1970s Canadian television show "Exodus of the Japanese" by Pierre Berton, and *Enemy Alien* by the National Film Board.

Chapter Three discusses the general context of the *redress era*, the late 1970s up to the signing of the redress agreement in 1988, and two representative texts that bookmark that time-period: the novel *Obasan* (1981), by Joy Kogawa; and *The Displaced View* (1988) by Midi Onodera. These two texts are discussed in relationship to the political climate and the media coverage of the period, and the polemics of *Obasan*'s critical reception are also explored. The overwhelming critical attention and popular discussion of *Obasan* in both the social and political spheres has become the representative text on *evacuation*, which is the ironic result of a narrative that self-reflexively narrates the fallibility of memory and denies any one version of history. Onodera's film bookends the redress period and *The Displaced View* illustrates for its viewers the difficulties of generational differences and linguistic separation in the director's family. Onodera's issei grandmother speaks to her in Japanese, and as a sansei grandchild she only understands minimal Japanese. Their relationship is caught in a liminal space between Japanese and English, and Onodera's nisei mother has always had to translate their relationship for them. The film becomes a medium for the director to communicate directly with her grandmother, without speaking through her mother. Both of these texts, one literary and one cinematic, contribute to a community autobiography that revolves equally around re-membering family and community, as well as history and the events of the West Coast *evacuation*.

Chapters Four and Five, respectively, go on to discuss texts that either reiterate the narrative of the dominant discourse or re-create a new Japanese Canadian identity in the post-redress era. After redress was achieved, the dominant discourse was quick to again recuperate the narratives of Japanese Canadian stories as survival narratives in much the same way as they had been narrated in the 1970s. After redress, Japanese Canadians were again recuperated by the dominant discourse as a group of model minority citizens who had prospered economically in the face of historical racism and adversity. This created new challenges for Japanese Canadians writers and filmmakers who envisioned a community narrative more complex than that of the model minority citizen narrated for them by the dominant discourse, which was able to reintegrate the narrative of *evacuation* as an aberration for which the nation had apologized. In Chapter Five, therefore, several of Kerri Sakamoto's texts, written in the post-redress era, are identified as innovative texts that reconsider the experience of discovering and re-membering family histories. Her texts highlight that a government apology still does not erase the residual effects of human rights abuses that continue to reverberate for generations in families and communities. Her narratives speak against narratives that recuperate the history of racism of the pre-Second-World-War era and the wartime *evacuation* as part of the Canadian myth where Multiculturalism erases past and present

The primary sources for this dissertation are drawn from both mainstream narratives and texts produced by Japanese Canadians. The Japanese Canadian novels and films (mostly documentary) produced by Japanese Canadians will be considered in relationship to texts produced by the dominant discourse to show how Japanese Canadians respond to the identities that have been and continue to be imposed upon them by the dominant discourse, as a recuperative mechanism for promoting Multiculturalism.

b) Parameters of Methodology

A diachronic analysis of texts about Japanese Canadian *evacuation* by both the dominant discourse and Japanese Canadians reveals how the representations are intrinsically linked to the era in which their textual production occurs. In his article "Blurring Boundaries: Asian American literature as theory," Donald C. Goellnicht presents a method of developing and using theory in a manner that is specifically applicable to Asian American literature. He asks:

> How does one employ theory positively, to "elucidat[e] the significances of ethnicity," rather than "pathologically, as symptomatic of the mutual implications between modernity and imperialism". . . . One way, I believe is to read Asian American texts as theoretically informed and informing rather than as transparently referential human documents over which we place a grid of sophisticated Euro-American theory in order to extract meaning. This theory-as-grid model repeats the colonizing or imperialistic strategy of containment and domination of the 'other' as inferior and dependent (on external theory to construct meaning), the very strategy we must seek to escape if Asian American

> literature is to speak to us in its own theoretically informed voice. (340)

The methodology I use to approach my texts is guided predominantly by the theoretical approaches presented in the primary texts, but I will also rely on the theories of critics of, amongst others, Yasmeen Abu-Laban, William Anselmi, Guy Beauregard, E.D. Blodgett, King-Kok Cheung, Donald C.Goellnicht, Kirsten McAllister, Roy Miki, Heather Zwicker, etc. Looking to the primary sources for the theoretical foundation for my thesis, my methodology will rely primarily on a semiotic analysis of the material in relationship to Multiculturalism and national myth making. Cheung, in her book *Articulate Silences: Hisaye Yamamoto, Maxine Hong Kingston, Joy Kogawa,* and Manina Jones, in *That Art of Difference: "Documentary-Collage" and English-Canadian Writing*, agree that it is not useful to assess the accuracy of the narrated histories of Japanese Canadian experience in Canada, but rather to acknowledge what the literature itself makes clear: memory is fallible, history is pieced together, and each of these individual explorations of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* and Japanese Canadian history in general is one voice adding to the collage of heterogeneous perspectives. This is best summarized by Foucault's point that "the origin lies at a place of inevitable loss, the point where the truth of things corresponded to a truthful discourse, the site of a fleeting articulation that discourse has obscured and finally lost" (143). Japanese Canadian histories convey neither truths nor un-truths, but versions of a multifaceted experience of which each is tied to its contemporary Canadian reality as well as the historical experience. The insertion of historical events and documents disrupts the notion of fiction, but the backdrop of 'non-fiction' undermines the notion of reliability and authenticity. In *Reading Canadian Reading*, Frank Davey argues that writers "who work out of a ground of inherited written material attempt to bring that old material … to the possibility of further meaning" (131). The innovative Japanese Canadian texts from the *post-inter(n)ment* period explore and narrate an identity of the self and the community through past internment and family history, by relying on a collage of historical documents and photographs. These documents and photographs were previously assigned significance and value by elected men of power. This thesis will analyze how the interaction of past and present call into question the authority of the existing history and reconfigures a new narration of identity by re-contextualizing historical documents and artefacts through literature and cinema. Focusing on the literary and cinematic texts about internment, the history books, newspaper articles, and conference proceedings produced by both Japanese Canadians and non-Japanese Canadians will be used as secondary references. Michael Holoquist, in his introduction to Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination* says:

> [H]istory has most often been compared with the novel because both presume a certain completeness of inventory. Each in its own way strives to give narrative shape to material of encyclopedic variety and plenitude . . . . But as Bakhtin has said of Pushkin's work, [as it can be said of Kogawa's or Sakamoto's or Ohama's work], it is not an encyclopedia that merely catalogs inert institutions, the brute things of everyday life: 'Russian life [or Japanese Canadian life] speaks in all its voices . . . in all the languages and styles of the era. (xxviii)

The novels and documentary films narrate individual and collective histories through a dialogism of polyphonic voices that bring to life a complex Japanese Canadian identity in the minds of the Canadian public so as to narrate them into the popular conception of the imagined Canadian community.

The innovative texts from each period are analyzed with a focus on how they are renegotiating the historical narrations of Japanese Canadian identities by the dominant/ white voices. Japanese Canadian texts that acknowledge factual constructions and are conscious that they are not the final and authoritative word on Japanese Canadian history and identity are created in reaction to texts from the dominant discourse that are stylistically different and speak from a place of authority. Clearly, certain texts written or directed by Japanese Canadians, also exhibit evidence of Multicultural recuperations, and add nothing inspired to Japanese Canadian identities. Often, the Japanese Canadian-authored films show evidence of having been manipulated by Multicultural funding,[14] and in some cases are part of larger educational series designed to promote government rhetoric on the successes of Multiculturalism. These simple narratives of triumph over adversity that result in the "Canadianness" of Others living within the Canadian mosaic do not acknowledge the binary function of Multiculturalism, which functions by process of inclusionexclusions. The ethno-cultural citizen is either included as a model citizen who risks erasure or excluded as an Other, depending on the socio-political context.

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[14] Japanese Canadian narratives that express attitudes aligned with Multiculturalism are found most frequently in the medium of film, rather than literature because the funding necessary to make films is sometimes available to filmmakers only if they are willing to follow series guidelines and work with producers who influence the final product. Still, the perpetuation of recuperated views does happen in Japanese Canadian literature to a lesser degree. Nevertheless, the cinematic productions that reinforce state-multicultural views of Japanese Canadian identity and history are especially problematic because they are often part of educational kits used in schools, which are widely distributed to libraries and educational institutions. This means that there is a receptive and often non-critical audience for these "educational" (propagandic) films.

The innovative texts by Japanese Canadian authors must negotiate erasure in a Multicultural society that promotes assimilation by constantly engaging in the creative act of negotiating and even inventing cultural histories that allow for a heterogeneity of Japanese Canadian stories and potential identities. Some of the innovative Japanese Canadian narratives, such as those by Onodera or Ohama, provide positive possibilities for Japanese Canadian future(s). Others are more of a critical warning about what awaits the ethno-cultural citizen who is not astute enough to escape the assimilation or self-hatred that parallel the inclusion or exclusion of the Multicultural binary. Either way, Japanese Canadian narratives that defy recuperation by the narrative of the "Canadian mosaic" allow Japanese Canadians to maintain hegemony over a sense of self, which results in a heterogeneity of identities and histories[15] necessary to create escape the assimilation of inclusion or the persecution of exclusion and to attempt to create a third space that disrupts the binary of the dominant versus the non-dominant perspectives.

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[15] I have used "histories" plural because the innovative Japanese Canadian narratives acknowledge that theirs is only one possible history, made up of a collection of fallible memories and artifacts that take on different meaning when framed by different voices and contexts.

CHAPTER ONE

From the Moment of Immigration: 1877

a) Establishing the Narrative

Japanese immigration to Canada is marked by the arrival of the first Japanese immigrant – Manzo Nagano – who came to Canada in 1877. Like many Japanese immigrants to follow him, he was a young man who thought he would come to Canada as a visiting labourer, make money, and take it back to Japan. Only as of 1868, at the end of the Tokugawa period, had it become possible for Japanese people to travel abroad. Previously, attempts to leave Japan were punishable by death. Then, the Meiji Restoration ushered in a change in attitude and of policy. Suddenly, the motto was *Fukoku-kyohei*: "enrich the nation and strengthen the military" (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 12). Most young Japanese men who came to Canada were single and did not intend to immigrate, which worked well, since Canada's founding fathers were creating immigration laws to ensure that Japanese immigrants were a non-renewable labour-force, and that they remained nomadic transients in a land being forged by and for white Protestant settlers.[16] The settlement

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[16] In *Selling Diversity: immigration, multiculturalism, employment equity, and globalization*, Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Christina Gabriel nicely summarize the intentions of Canadian immigration policy, which according to their analysis has been centered around two main issues:

> The first relates to religion, race, and ethnicity. (…) For much of Canadian history immigration policy explicitly favoured white, particularly British-origin, Protestants, who were viewed as 'model-citizens.' The second issue which historically has affected immigration policy making is the perceived needs of the labour market, which at times required the admission of immigrants viewed as 'not ideal' (non-British and non-Protestant). For example between 1880 and 1884, when the Canadian Pacific Railway was being constructed, Chinese (male) labourers were recruited specifically to work on the most dangerous and least well-paid jobs. Then, following the completion of the railway in 1885, the Chinese Immigration Act was passed. This Act introduced the infamous 'head-tax' system by which Chinese admission to Canada was made progressively more expensive and prohibitive, until it was completely banned by further legislation in 1923. Chinese women and children were not allowed admission into the country. These policies were intended

of communities was discouraged by immigration policies that encouraged male (and not female) immigration. A male labour force of undesirable or alien labourers was a non-renewable resource. Female immigration would change that. Japanese immigrants were only one among several undesirable communities that the colonial settlers eventually wanted to expunge from the Canadian landscape: the New World that they were forming in their own image.

Eerily coincidental was that simultaneous to the first years of Japanese immigration, the Canadian government was writing legislation that would foreshadow the treatment of Japanese Canadian populations, half a century later: The Indian Act (1884) and the Indian Advancement Act (1884), which were amended by 1894, gave the government control over the education of the native populations of Canada, and these acts created the reserve system: a location to educate, and thereby assimilate, the native population. The reservation system would become the historical prototype later used as a model to solve the "Japanese problem" in B.C., during the Second World War.[17] Much like the later "Japanese Problem," the "Indian Problem" or "Indian Question" was being solved through the creation of racist legislation:

> to discourage permanent settlement and prevent the increase in the size of the 'alien' population. (37-8)

[17] Rhonda Claes and Deborah Clifton, in their article published by the Law Commission of Canada, "Institutional Child Abuse: Needs and Expectations for Redress of Victims of Abuse at Native Residential Schools," point out that the reserve systems were created, not for the benefit of the native populations, but for the benefit of European settlers:

> Reserves tended to be established in agriculturally inferior areas; most were intentionally located in areas where they would not interfere with white economic development. In the treaty process, along with guaranteed small land allocations, gratuities and annuities, each band received the promise of a school. (…) But the 1894 amendments began a trend away from control [by the communities proper] to more centralised departmental control over both the nature of Indian schools and attendance. Compulsory attendance for children 'of Indian blood' under age sixteen was introduced, along with powers to arrest, convey, and detain children at school. The amendments also provide for fines or imprisonment of parents or guardians who failed to send their children to schools. (16)

> Deputy Superintendent General Duncan Campbell Scott influenced federal Indian policy over twenty years, expounding a firm belief in assimilation, "the further development of the race toward its ultimate goal, that is, its absorption into the ordinary civil life of the country." In a 1920 House of Commons discussion of changes to the Indian Act, Scott stated clearly the idea that Indian cultures as such were to be eliminated." (Claes and Clifton 17)

Duncan Campbell Scott is cited as saying the following:

> "I want to get rid of the Indian problem… Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question and no Indian department, that is the whole object of this Bill." (qtd. in Miller and Lerchs 114)

Canada's racist immigration policies and corresponding legislations are older than the nation itself, and were well-established before the arrival of Japanese immigrants to Canada. In the late nineteenth century, Japanese immigrants simply represented a temporary solution to labour problems, and were not considered full participants in the formation of the nation – i.e. pioneers of the nation – and they were never expected to settle permanently in the country. Therefore, like many other ethno-cultural groups and visible minorities, they have not been included in the pioneer narrative. The redress campaign, a century later, would highlight the need to create a more complex history that represents the realities of the Canadian nation, as opposed to the historical (racist and prejudiced) perceptions on which the national myth has been founded. Of course, it is not only Japanese Canadian pioneers that have been under-represented in the narration of nation, but a myriad of ethno-cultural groups; multiculturalism, after all, was a reality of Canada from its inception as a nation, and was not merely an invention of Trudeau's Liberal government of 1970.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the first Japanese *nomads,* were seeking their fortunes by working in the fishing, logging, farming, or mining industries. Before 1908, more than 20,000 Japanese people – mostly men and a few women – had been to Canada, but most of them were temporary residents. They were considered *dekasegi*: people "leaving the village for employment" (*Japanese Canadian Centennial Project* 13) with the intention of returning to Japan. About ninety percent of the 20,000 Japanese people who had been to Canada by 1908 eventually returned to Japan. Some went on to settle in the United States, and a few remained here in Canada. Those that stayed on in Canada are the founding ancestors of the present Japanese Canadian community (A. Kobayashi 82). Audrey Kobayashi, a Queen's professor, claims that the Japanese Canadian community in Canada only took on any permanence after 1910, with the arrival of the first picture brides. The Lemieux Agreement of 1908 limited immigration of adult males, but not the number of wives entering the country, and so began the exchange of photographs, and arranged marriages via mail (i.e. picture brides). In 1913 alone, between 300 and 400 brides arrived (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 18). Picture brides came to Canada between 1908 and 1928. Up until the arrival of the brides, Japanese men considered themselves just that – Japanese men – recognizing that their homeland was Japan; it was to Japan that they eventually hoped to return. With the arrival of women came children and community life, and a shift in mentality about place, and self, and the locus of home. The families of these labouring Japanese men were slowly becoming a part of the Canadian landscape. The indefinite residence of these men and their families lead to community life and with it the formation of community identities.

These identities were, however, very complex. They were divided along a number of practical and ideological lines including religion, tradition, varying economic circumstances, and regional/prefectural ties related to where they had emigrated from in Japan. After coming to Canada, some families converted to Christianity, while others remained Buddhist. Even within Buddhism, however, there are numerous belief systems and practices. Overly simplified, Japanese immigrants who converted to Christianity considered themselves more progressive than those who remained Buddhists. By the 1920s, progressives and conservatives alike were starting their own businesses, buying fishing vessels, and bidding for logging contracts. As well, they had young families who were being educated in Canada, thereby absorbing Canadian values and learning traditions. These men were becoming more heavily economically invested in Canada, and were bound to the nation by their financial ties; their children were emotionally invested in Canada, and bound to the nation by their ideological ties: place and language being strongly linked to their sense of identity and self.

To the chagrin of their parents, many of the nisei (Japanese Canadians born in Canada) rejected the idea of Japan as their homeland. The only country they knew was Canada, and for many English was, if not their mother tongue, their language of adaptation, and thus the language for which they could claim the greatest spoken and written proficiency. This generational chasm marked yet another division in an already-divided community. Now, differences in the Japanese Canadian community were not based solely on kinship, tradition, religion, or economic status, but on the generational differences of opinion on these issues; the generational differences resulted in changing perceptions of self and personal identity, which extended to differing perception of community identity, held by the more Canadian nisei, relative to those of their more Japanese issei parents. Despite all of these differences Japanese in Canada, in the early part of the century, were still viewed by the European-Canadian settlers, as a homogeneous group of people, working cooperatively, whose numbers, therefore, represented a threat at economic, political, and social levels.

As early as 1905 the Japanese Canadian population was sufficiently dense in Vancouver's Powell Street and Main Street to earn the area the name "Little Tokyo." With increasing numbers came increasing discrimination. By 1907, racial tensions were running high. With the arrival of the *Kumeric* ship from Hawaii, carrying 1,177 Japanese passengers, rumour was that " 'white' BC would soon be overrun by great masses of 'little brown men'" (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 30). Tensions only mounted when the Attorney General of B.C. falsely warned the legislature that 50,000 Japanese people were preparing to embark for Canada. Fear motivated the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council to establish the Asiatic Exclusion League (30-31). September 7, 1907 marks the Powell Street riot:

> A crowd of some 5,000 – screaming 'Down with the Japs' and demanding a 'White Canada' – gathered in front of City Hall. Someone threw a brick through the window of a Chinese store on Carrall Street, and the crowd suddenly turned wild. They swept through Chinatown, shattering windows and breaking into stores. When they reached Little Tokyo, however, the Japanese were ready. With bottles and clubs, shouting 'Banzai,' they met the whites head on. The whites soon wavered and retreated before this unexpected and fiery resistance.
>
> With the fear of 'yellow peril' at its height in BC, Prime Minister Laurier sent his Minister of Labour, Rodolphe Lemieux as Canadian Commissioner to Japan to conclude the 'gentlemen's agreement' of 1908, placing Japanese immigrants on an annual quota system. (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 31)

This event is one example of many where B.C. politicians preyed on the ignorance and fear of the B.C. population, encouraging constituents to react to public misinformation – often racist – in ways that would allow Canadian politicians to pass pre-conceived racist legislations that could now be touted as a service rendered in response to the demands of their constituents. B.C. took the lead and created the template for federal politics. The politics of racializing Japanese Canadians was a very circular process. The motivations behind much of the fear, which bred injustices, was not only ignorance about and fear of the Japanese culture, but were, in many cases, purely economically motivated. In *The Making of the Mosaic: A History* *of Canadian Immigration Policy*, Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock document the legislations that restricted Asian and Japanese Canadians, pointing out that the various legislation was even, in some cases, impossible to reconcile;[18] however, the "fact that employer interests were rarely prejudiced by judicial decisions suggests that the judiciary were as sensitive to business concerns as were the politicians" (142). Politicians and businessmen were running the country and creating the legislations upon which the Canadian legal system is based. However, it cannot go without mention that many nation-builders held racist beliefs, and many of the laws and legislations that have founded and sculpted Canada uphold these historical perspectives.

Virulent prejudice was often motivated by fears of economic take-over. There was much anti-Japanese, and anti-Asian sentiment (East Asian[19] and South Asian).[20] Media and popular discourse perpetuated the racist stereotypes that characterized Japanese people as "dishonest, unclean, immoral, and unable to assimilate" (143).

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[18] Kelley and Trebilcock write: "By the turn of the century, the pattern of judicial decisions revealed a tendency on the part of the courts to strike down legislation that adversely affected employers' economic interests and a reluctance to interfere with laws which affected aliens exclusively. Thus, B.C. statutes which restricted the right of employers to hire Asians, for example, were declared invalid as being beyond provincial jurisdiction, while provincial laws regulating the right of Asians to vote or to hire white employees were found to be lawful exercises of provincial powers" (141).

[19] While there was a head-tax placed on Chinese immigrants, there were also many exemptions. Mackenzie King and other members of his government condoned the exemptions because of the positive repercutions they had on trade-relations with China. However, Kelley and Trebilcock point out that while "Chinese immigrants were not as tightly regulated as their Japanese and East Indian counterparts [it] did not mean that they were accorded any better treatment in Canada" (153). In fact, there were attempts by B.C. authorities to push "the Chinese out of white schools and into schools of their own" and the Opium Act of 1908 was passed "exclusively to target the Chinese community, which used opium for recreational and medicinal purposes, leaving non-Chinese pharmacists and doctors, for example, free of sanction" (153).

[20] One example of prejudiced legislation against South Asians, was the 1914 *Komagata Maru* incident. The passengers, mostly Indians from British India, arriving on the *Komagata Maru* ship, were denied entry to Canada. Two months after their arrival, never having entered Canada, they were escorted out of the Vancouver Harbour by Canadian warships. This event signalled the end of Indian immigration to Canada for six years: "Between 1914 and 1920, only one East Indian immigrant was admitted. Over the next twenty-five years, fewer than 650 settled in Canada" (Kelley and Trebilcock 152).

The trade unions claimed that Asian immigrants were a threat to white workers, because Asians were willing to work for less pay. This is an invalid claim, of course, because employers were using immigration, and particularly Asian immigrants, to try and weaken working class solidarity, which then served to fuel racism in the trade union movement. As Kelley and Trebilcock later point out, immigrant workers were "sought after by employers because they would work for relatively low wages and because they had a weakening effect on trade-union activity" (144). The fishing industry was particularly vicious towards "Japanese"[21] workers, because prior to 1892, the fishing industry on the West Coast was dominated by white fishermen. After that point, however, there were ever-increasing numbers of "Japanese" fishermen (143). Complaints again arose that "Japanese" workers – in this case fishermen – were "charging fish canneries less than the going rate for fish, and that they were willing to break strikes" (144). "Japanese" workers were only trying to survive in an economy that generally paid them less than their white counterparts. In *Politics,* Sunahara points out the double-bind in which Japanese workers found themselves:

> For seventy years the anti-Asian movement had exploited the fears of those in real or imagined competition with Asians. The racists succeeded because Asians were paid lower wages than their white counterparts. By working for less, the racists argued, Asians undermined white living standards. At the same time the obvious solution – equal pay for equal work – was unthinkable since Asians,

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[21] When the term "Japanese" is used between quotation marks, it is to acknowledge the intentional use of the term before "Japanese Canadian" was an acknowledged identity.

> by definition, were inferior and therefore must be paid less. Yet while theoretically inferior, Asians were considered unfair competition because they were superior workers. To counteract the debilitating effects of their lower wage, Asians worked longer hours and had higher productivity than their white counterparts. To the labour agitators, compensating for a low wage with high productivity was an unfair tactic. Damned for having a lower standard of living and damned for working hard in order to raise it, Asians were locked into a double standard. Their only escape required the cooperation of those who feared them most: their competitors. (10-11)

Japanese Canadians were in a powerless situation to affect change. They were not organized politically on any large-scale level, despite what might have been propagated at the time, and did not have any political voice, as they were not voting citizens of the country.

Racist laws instituted as early as 1895, when there had been fewer than 1,000 Japanese in Canada, prohibited them from voting.[22] British Columbia had, at that time, amended the Provincial Voters Act, excluding anyone of Japanese descent from voting in the provincial election (144). This created a domino effect of prejudice. People of Japanese descent were excluded from voting in the federal elections, as well as creating precedence[23] for legislation of this sort:

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[22] "In 1895, British Columbia refused the vote to all persons of Asiatic origin. In 1902, persons of Japanese ancestry were refused the right to vote in federal elections" (Adachi 345).

[23] "The B.C. legislature's efforts to discourage Asian immigration extended well beyond the franchise prohibition. As discussed earlier, the provincial government regularly sent petitions to Ottawa and passed its own anti-Asian resolutions and exclusionary statutes aimed at barring Asian workers from employment on public-works projects and in companies holding Crown licenses. In addition, private statutes of incorporation also contained clauses prohibiting the employment of Chinese and Japanese

> Since placement on the provincial voters' list was a prerequisite for voting in federal elections, Chinese and Japanese persons in British Columbia were denied the federal franchise as well. Disenfranchisement bore consequences beyond the inability to participate in the political life of the country. It also disqualified them from sitting on juries and entering various professions, such as law, pharmacy, and teaching. And while not legally confined to menial work, they were prevented from advancement by other discriminatory employment practices. As a result, many Chinese and Japanese persons preferred to run their own businesses. Their social ostracism, as reflected in their exclusion from private clubs and other Anglo-dominated institutions, encouraged support of their own social, religious, and economic affiliations. (Kelley and Trebilcock 144)

Several Japanese Canadians had fought for the right to vote. In fact, as early as 1900, Tomekichi (Tomey) Homma[24] had applied to have his name added to the voters, list, but was turned down because of Section 8 of the Provincial Election Act that stated that "no Chinaman, Japanese, or Indian shall have his name placed on the Register of Voters for any Electoral District, or be entitled to vote in any election" (qtd. in R.

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workers. British Columbia's legislative attempts to exclude Asian immigrants were generally reserved by the lieutenant-governor, or disallowed by the federal Cabinet, or found to be beyond provincial jurisdiction by the courts. Often the B.C. legislature simply responded by re-enacting them in slightly modified form, with the result that, in 1902, for example, thirteen anti-Asian bills were disallowed by the Dominion, only to be re-enacted by a combative B.C. legislature" (Kelley and Trebilcock 144-5).

[24] There seem to be two spellings of his last name. Roy Miki refers to him as Tomekichi Homma, and the publication *A Dream of Riches* refers to him as Tomekichi Honma. Both spellings are supported by other legal documents that use one or the other spelling. I have chosen to use Homma, as does Miki, because this seems to be the more common usage. However, some of the quoted material embedded within this document states Honma. They both refer to the self-same person: Tomekichi (Tomey) Honma/Homma

Miki, *Redress* 26). In the end, Honma's case was overthrown,[25] and Japanese Canadians were denied the franchise until 1949, barring the fact that by April 1, 1931 those Japanese Canadian veterans[26] still alive by that time were given the franchise. By the 1930s there was a growing population of nisei children reaching the age of adulthood. This generation of Canadian youth were barred from certain professions, from certain civil service roles (jury duty, trustees, law, politics, pharmacy), and were denied the vote, based on their race and their status as second-class citizens.[27] This new generation of Japanese Canadians had a different relationship to Canada than had the immigrants of the late nineteenth century, and as Canadian-born citizens they petitioned for the right to vote in the 1930s, forming the JCCL, Japanese

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[25] "In 1900, Tomekichi Honma, a naturalized Canadian citizen, sued the BC government for refusing to put his name on the voter's list. Honma won his case at the lower court and the Supreme Court of Canada. However, in 1902 the hopes of Japanese Canadians were crushed when the Privy Council in London reversed the decision for Honma. Denial of the BC franchise meant the Japanese were excluded from: -- voting in federal an municipal as well as provincial elections – nominations to the provincial legislature or municipal office – juror's duty –voting for school trustees or being elected as a trustee – certain professions (for example, they could not practise law or pharmacy or enter the civil service" (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 38-9).

[26] 196 Japanese Canadian men had volunteered as soldiers for Canada during the First World War. "Out of the 196 volunteers who went to war, 54 were killed, 93 wounded, and only 49 returned home safely. This proof in blood was in vain. The surviving Japanese Canadian veterans of World War 1 were not granted the franchise by the BC legislature until 12 years after their return, and this by a narrow margin of one vote. For the rest of the Japanese in BC, the barrier remained unbroken" (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 40).

[27] In *The Enemy That Never Was*, Ken Adachi explains what the economic and professional ramifications were of being denied the franchise:

> Barring the Japanese from the franchise, while not actually writing discriminatory regulations in the field of employment into the law, did result in a de facto exclusion of British subjects of Japanese race from certain fields of employment. Licenses for hand logging required the applicant to be on the voters' list. In contracts awarded by the Department of Public Works, the contractor was bound to give preference to British subjects and not to employ any Asiatic "directly or indirectly, upon, about or in connection with the works," If the clause was violated, the Minister could forfeit all money due to the contractor. In the law and pharmacy professions, it was required that the name of the student or apprentice, when he reached the age of twenty-one, be on the voters' list. This regulation was written into the rules of the Law Society of British Columbia and the pharmacy by-laws. The original by-laws of the Pharmaceutical Council of 1895 contained no such clause restricting applicants, but were amended in 1921 to take advantage of the franchise bar. Other de facto barriers were effectively to bar Japanese from such civil service branches as police, forestry, post office and public health nursing. (52)

Canadian Citizens' League. On May 22, 1936 a delegation was sent to Ottawa: Miss A. Hideko Hyodo, a schoolteacher, Mr. Minoru Kobayashi, a life insurance agent, Dr. E. Chutaro Banno, a dentist, and Dr. S. Ichie Hayakawa, a university professor (R. Miki, *Redress* 31). These delegates to Ottawa, who were representing the situation in B.C., were eloquent and clearly presented the situation in B.C. from their perspective. They emphasized their assimilation, and their attitudes, which were entirely Canadian, and not Japanese. R. Miki, in his most recent book entitled *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Redress* writes that these delegates educated the Special Committee members in Ottawa "not only about the unfairness of the restrictions imposed on Japanese Canadians, but also about the ability of Japanese Canadians to represent themselves through the very democratic processes they were being denied by legislation" (34). One member was impressed that delegates' English was so fluent, and expressed surprise at finding out that "these conditions exist in British Columbia" (34). However, the Special Committee did not convene again for a year, and the Japanese Canadian delegates were absent at the second meeting. The virulently racist B.C. politicians A.W. Neill and Thomas Reid argued against the franchise, invoking fears about intermarriage as a threat to racial purity and fears about Japanese Canadians' inability to assimilate and their loyalty to Japan. They also incited fear that if Japanese Canadians were accorded all rights of citizenship the government would not be able to "impose restrictions on them, and soon they would multiply and take over the province and the rest of the country" (36). It should be noted that at the time Japanese Canadians made up only three percent of the B.C. population: 23,000 of the 700,000 people in British Columbia (35). Their numbers hardly constituted a threat proportional to the virulent anti-Japanese sentiment ruling B.C. politics at the time.[28] However, Japanese Canadians were not permitted the franchise until well after the end of the Second World War: they finally received the vote in 1949.

To recap, until the Second World War, the white Canadian community – through the eyes of specific political leaders, such as Ian Mackenzie, A.W. Neill, and Thomas Reid – perceived Japanese Canadians as a united group, and as a threat. However, they were also already contained and isolated, both geographically, by their dispersal across the country and by creating a spectacle of ethnicity. Japanese Canadians could not develop ethno-cultural politics in cooperation with Other groups.

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[28] In 1932 the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) was formed in the West (originally in Calgary and then a year later in Regina); they advocated that "all Canadian citizens, regardless of race, should have the right to vote. . . . the Liberals found a pretext to accuse the CCF of being pro-Asian, the 'kiss of death' in white Canada. This attack continued in the 1935 B.C. election campaign in the well-publicized slogan: 'A vote for any CCF candidate is a vote to give the Chinaman and Japanese the same voting right that you have" (R. Miki, *Redress*, 30). Ian Mackenzie was also a powerful politician and a virulent racist. Sunahara documents the following, in regards to Ian Mackenzie, in her book *Politics*:

> A personable bachelor, Ian Mackenzie had three flaws: he was fond of alcohol, he was not a strong administrator, and he was, in the words of his close friend, Conservative M.P. and future Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker, 'somewhat unreasonable' about Asians. David Lewis, CCF national secretary in 1941 and future leader of the new Democratic Party, was more blunt in his recollections. 'Ian Mackenzie,' he recalled, 'was a racist, pure and simple.' Mackenzie was the impetus behind the Liberal party's anti-Asian campaigns in British Columbia. He was a man who had no qualms about associating himself with hate literature that employed every lie and innuendo in the arsenal of the White Canada Association, literature with slogans like: 'A vote for ANY C.C.F. Candidate is a VOTE TO GIVE the CHINAMAN and JAPANESE the same Voting Right that you have!' By 1941 Mackenzie had been in politics for twenty-one years. In that entire time, with one notable exception, he had endorsed every anti-Asian proposal raised in the Legislative Assembly, in Parliament and in cabinet. While blatantly anti-Asian in his election campaigns in British Columbia, Mackenzie took a more subtle tact in Ottawa. There he preferred to work behind the scenes on Asian matters, as befitted someone who wished to remain a close friend of Canada's most subtle prime minister, Mackenzie King. In the interwar years Mackenzie left the ranting and raving to men like Neill and Reid, affecting the posture among his fellow MPs that his anti-Asian stance was simply a political requirement, an unavoidable aberration of B.C. politics. By not allowing his anti-Asian sentiments to intrude into social situations in Ottawa, Mackenzie was able to retain the friendship of men like Diefenbaker, who would later style himself a defender of minorities. (16-7)

The mentality of the European world prior to the Second World War was one of colonization. Canada was not exempt from the racism that stemmed from that mentality of superiority. Socially, there was very little mingling between the European settlers and the Japanese settlers. Japanese Canadians had been identified by the term "Yellow Peril." After Pearl Harbour, they became known as Enemy Aliens. (Today, the terms *fundamentalist* and particularly *terrorist* are used to conjure up the same kind of fear that these terms concocted in the 1940s. However, speaking strictly in terms of policy, the focus is on "terrorist.") However, "Enemy Alien" was a term that subsumed all Japanese Canadians, which was, under the Geneva Convention, unlawful. "Under the Geneva Convention, only 'enemy aliens' – not citizens – could be interned," (R. Miki, *Redress* 141) so the term "Enemy Alien" originally used to denote all Japanese Canadians, was replaced legally by the terms "any or all persons of the Japanese race." This accomplished the government's agenda of mass *evacuation*, displacement/relocation, and deportation/repatriation, at minimal cost to the government and at the expense of financial ruin for Japanese Canadians.[29]

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[29] Roy Miki explains the process of re-classifying Japanese Canadians in *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*:

> [O]n February 24, the Canadian government passed Order-in-Council PC 1486. The wording of PC 1486, an amendment to the Defence of Canada Regulations, which had earlier established the "protected area," can be seen as the discourse that prepared the way for the legal racialization of Japanese Canadians. Since Japanese Canadians were "Canadian citizens," under the Defence of Canada Regulations they could not be categorized as the "enemy aliens" designated by the earlier PC 365, which had ordered the removal of male nationals only. Policy makers, though, simply replaced the words "enemy aliens" with "any or all persons," an all-inclusive category that then allowed the minister of justice (not the minister of defence) to limit the "any or all persons" to those who could be identified as "of the Japanese race." Two days later, on February 26, such a regulation was issued under the signature of the justice minister, Louis St. Laurent. From this point forward, all "persons of Japanese race," which is to say, all those designated as such by government authorities, could be treated *as if* they were "enemy aliens." (90)

b) Becoming Enemy Alien: Anti-Asian Sentiment in B.C.

By the early 1940s Japanese Canadians were keeping a close eye on the events taking place in Japan. In 1939, when Germany had declared war, and in 1940, when Italy had joined them, hundreds of German and Italian men identified as a threat to Canada had been rounded up and interned under the War Measures Act. Japanese Canadians, influenced by Thomas Shoyama, editor of the Japanese community newspaper *New Canadian*, did not expect to be treated even as well as Italian Canadians and German Canadians who were not being accorded due process of law (Sunahara, *Politics* 9). Shoyama suspected that in addition to certain incarcerations, the nisei would still be expected to report regularly to the RCMP, unlike their German Canadian and Italian Canadian counterparts. His speculations were based on the racist attitudes of the B.C. community towards Japanese Canadians. In his newspaper, Shoyama assured his readers that should Japan become an enemy to Canada, Japanese Canadians would be protected by democracy and would simply have to endure the harsh reactions of the public, which might even erupt into violence and vandalism, as it had against the German Canadian community.[30] Shoyama's speculations show not only the stresses that the Japanese Canadian community was under in anticipation of Japan's declaration of war, but also show a community in the process of trying to evaluate itself and surmising their social and political position. Comparing themselves to the German Canadian and Italian Canadian communities, they decided that the issei were in the most precarious position because they were Japanese nationals and their loyalty would therefore be questioned. It is important to note that Japanese Canadians had already acknowledged that they were not as accepted or respected as their German Canadian and Italian Canadian counterparts, and so they did not assume that their Canadian-born children would be considered as loyal as the Canadian-born Italians or Germans.

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[30] "The vandalism inflicted on German Baptist churches in Vancouver in the spring of 1940 had already shown how the irresponsible would behave in the time of war" (Sunahara, *Politics* 9).

Anti-Asian sentiment was not new to provincial or federal politics in the early part of the century. Both Liberal and Conservative politicians, on the federal and provincial levels were quick to assume anti-Asian attitudes. Sunahara writes:

> While their [the politicians'] degree of enthusiasm would vary according to the personal standards of each man, no Liberal or Conservative politician questioned the tradition of exploiting the anti-Asian feelings of the B.C. electorate. Indeed some were zealots. Men like Thomas Reid, the liberal M.P. for New Westminister, and A. W. Neill, an Independent representing Comox-Alberni, had consistently assumed an anti-Asian position, using arguments and literature supplied by the White Canada Association. Their styles were very different. Reid presented his irrational arguments with a shallow dignity that made them all the more powerful. Neill's venom lent deep emotion to blunt statements based on distorted facts. Since these men played on the kind of patriotism that vilifies a minority strongly identified with an enemy, Shoyama knew that they might incite violence against Japanese Canadians. He knew also that they would be incredibly difficult to stop, for arguments alone were useless against them. Such men were successful because they appealed not to

> logic, but to fear: fear of economic competition, fear of social disruption and intermarriage, and fear for personal and national security. (*Politics* 10)

What transpired was beyond their speculation. Nevertheless, there had been a historical precedence for what would happen: the reservation system. The failure of the Japanese Canadian population had been to compare themselves to Germans and Italians, and they quickly realized that they were in no way considered comparable to the Italian and German communities in Canada at that time. Had they realized that they were in a perilous position, not because of their national affiliation and the politics of those affiliations, but because of their race, they might have been able to recognize that they were about to be treated as the indigenous populations of Canada had been historically treated.

They were moved to internment camps, in many ways comparable to reservations. Their situation was not a matter of politics, but of racism, and the rhetoric that made this possible had existed for a long time. Japanese Canadians, like other visible minorities, were considered unassimilable as a result of their "race"[31] and throughout the 1920s and 1930s B.C.'s racists propagated that "Japanese Canadians were part of a long-term conspiracy by Japan to absorb British Columbia, and Japanese Canadians were portrayed as fifth columnists: spies and saboteurs. Regardless of what Japanese Canadians, or any Asian Canadian did to demonstrate loyalty,[32] their actions were twisted and interpreted as the those of "cunning agents of the governments of their ancestral homelands. Because Asians did not look like whites, it was assumed that they did not feel or think like other Canadians" (11). According to Sunahara, the four main reasons for deciding Japanese Canadians were a threat are as follows: The nisei had dual citizenship; some nisei, called kibei, were sent to Japan for their education; the textbooks used by the Japanese language schools in Canada were Japanese government textbooks (and this was interpreted as part of a conspiracy to prepare the young for the invasion of the Japanese, despite the fact that it was and is a matter of practicality still employed by both private and university Japanese language programs in Canada); and the Japanese consul had played a role in protesting the discrimination suffered by the Japanese Canadian population. These facts were manipulated as further proof for the fact that the consul "as Japan's representative, controlled Japanese Canadians and directed a conspiracy to overthrow British Columbia society" (11).

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[31] The term race is being used here in quotation marks since the notion of "race" has long been eliminated as a scientific classification; no ethnic group is so genetically distinct from another that they can be classified according to race.

[32] According to Sunahara, in her book *Politics*, Japanese Canadians – specifically the nisei –

c) Typology of *Evacuation:* Reclassifying Citizenship

December 7, 1941 marked a turning point for Japanese Canadians. Immediately after the news of the bombing of Pearl Harbour reached Canada, approximately 38 Japanese Canadian men were arrested. This was very similar to what had happened with the German Canadians and Italian Canadians before them. Between 1939 and 1945 over eight hundred German Canadians were interned on suspicion of disloyalty to Canada, and on June 10, Italy officially declared itself at war with Canada, prompting Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King to immediately invoke the War Measures Act. This empowered the Canadian

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were seen as disloyal because they held dual citizenship: "

government and the RCMP to begin interning Italian Canadian men and confiscating their property. In December 1941 Japanese Canadians expected similar treatment. The Japanese language school was also closed by command of the RCMP, and Japanese aliens were required to register with the RCMP (Sunahara, *Politics* 28). However, this is where the similarities end. On December 8, the Royal Canadian Navy began impounding, with the co-operation of Japanese Canadian fishermen, 1,200 boats of Japanese Canadian ownership. Five days later, the CPR fired Japanese Canadian employees. Many other companies began to follow the lead of the CPR. Vandals attacked Japanese Canadian homes and businesses, and insurance companies revoked fire insurance on all Japanese Canadian-owned buildings (Sunahara, *Politics* 28-9). Then, the Japanese fishing fleet was interned, and that became *proof* that the "Japanese" were a threat. The media also played a vital role in heightening public fear and suspicion of Japanese Canadians. The B.C. press demonstrated restraint at the beginning (through the month of December), but the American press demonstrated less diplomacy and that news travelled north to Canada:

> There were the almost daily warnings of impending Japanese attacks emanating from the panic-ridden and amateurish Western Defense Command Headquarters in San Francisco, warning that 'proved' that B.C. was in danger of invasion. Most importantly, there was the corroboration of the rumours of sabotage at Pearl Harbor by no less than the American secretary of the navy, Frank Knox. Returning on December 15 from a whirlwind inspection of the damages at Pearl Harbor, Knox unthinkingly and erroneously described the December 7

> attack as "the most effective fifth column work that has come out of this war since Norway." (Sunahara, *Politics* 30)[33]

Eventually, however, the Canadian press followed suit, in a less blatant but equally destructive manner. The main discussion in Canada revolved around whether Japanese Canadians should be allowed to continue fishing. Noteworthy, as Sunahara observes, is the fact that demands for the internment of Japanese Canadians "were confined almost exclusively to the often unsigned letters-to-the-editor" (30); she points out that "[p]rior to Christmas 1941, the Vancouver *Sun* printed 19 anti-Japanese letters and one letter deploring such letters" (*Politics* 181). The letters were unsigned and could have very easily been written by the same person, or a specific demographic of people who had something to gain from Japanese Canadian internment; another possibility is that they were specifically manufactured according to a political agenda. In fact, the letters could have been written by the self-same politicians using them as evidence in Ottawa of the demands of B.C. constituents to resolve the "Japanese Problem." Sunahara demonstrates further the impact of propaganda in *Politics*.

Despite the reassurances of the RCMP and the Canadian Military assuring the public that B.C. was in no danger of an attack by the Japanese, and urging calm, the public fears had been ignited by American media and B.C. politicians. The commanding officer in chief of the Pacific Command, Maj. Gen. R.O. Alexander, had admitted that a Japanese attack from the pacific would be limited.[34] It was not a major threat. However, fear propaganda had incited the public who began demanding internment. Japanese Canadian *evacuation* and internment became the goal of several B.C. politicians, who had long been racist and wanted to rid B.C. of the "Japanese problem." They saw this as their moment of opportunity, despite the fact that many citizens and political leaders did not agree with the proposed policies for Japanese Canadian *evacuation*. The debate played out on January 8, 1942 at the Conference on Japanese Problems, chaired by Ian Mackenzie, the B.C. politician who had been elected on a platform to rid British Columbia of the Yellow Peril. Sunahara writes:

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[33] If we change the names and dates, this all sounds eerily similar to the influence of American media on Canadian media-scapes, post-September 11, 2001. The historical reaction to Pearl Harbour can be seen as a template for what has occurred since September 11, 2001, and for what could still occur should the political climate continue to escalate in the same anti-"terrorist" manner. Nothing new is being invented. Rather, this is a repetition of history. Japanese Canadian internment was not an aberration, nor are the events of the post-September-eleventh era.

> Supporting Japanese Canadians in Ottawa were Norman Robertson, under-secretary for external affairs; Dr. Hugh Keenleyside, head of the American and far Eastern Divisions at External Affairs; H.F. Angus and Escott Reid, Keenleyside's special assistants: Col. S.T. Wood, commissioner of the RCMP, and Asst. Comnr. F.J. Mead; Lt. Gen. Maurice A. Pope, vice chief of general staff; Commodore H.E. Reid, deputy chief of naval staff; and representatives of the Departments of Labour and Fisheries, and the Office of the Press Censor. Convinced that the measures already undertaken were more than adequate, and fearful that further discrimination might result in retaliations against Canadian prisoners of war in Japanese hands, the military, the RCMP

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[34] Bombardment by one capital ship, by 2 8-inch gun cruisers or by one merchant raider mounting medium guns. Attack by minelaying craft, submarines, small surface craft and small underwater craft. Attack by small raiding parties, sea-borne aircraft on coastal and inland objectives. Slight risk of torpedo and gas attack from aircraft. (qtd. in Sunahara, *Politics* 32)

> and the civil servants hoped the conference would allay apprehensions in British Columbia. They were to be disappointed. The British Columbia delegation absolutely refused to accept the RCMP opinion that Japanese Canadians were loyal. (*Politics* 32)

The British Columbia Delegation claimed their racist beliefs were shared by their constituents. However, they were not: not unanimously, in any case. Ian Mackenzie had received very few letters from B.C. constituents. Of the forty-five letters received, twenty-eight demanded the incarceration of Japanese aliens or of all Japanese Canadians. Six opposed internment, and vouched for the loyalty of Japanese Canadians, and the rest of the letters demanded limitations on Japanese Canadian employment (Sunahara 34).

In the end, internment and relocation of the 22,000 Japanese Canadians who lived within the one hundred mile zone of the West Coast was an economically profitable endeavour for the Canadian government and specific factions of the Canadian population. While the terminology of "internment" is now invoked when discussing these historical policies, the terms at the time were somewhat different. There were a number of other terms used, including relocation and evacuation (and at a later stage, deportation), because according to the Geneva Convention, *citizens* cannot be interned, and anyone who is interned needed to be provided for:

> Even if the government were to ignore that rule [that citizens could not be interned] – under the War Measures Act it could perhaps justify such action – it would have paid the costs of building what would then be "internment camps," and would also have provided food and

> clothing to the internees, as the United States did for Japanese Americans. (R. Miki, *Redress* 141)

Therefore, while the term Enemy Alien suddenly denoted the entirety of the Japanese Canadian community – including both naturalized Japanese, and Canadian citizens – the term internment is only used in retrospect; at that historical moment, it would have been unlawful to displace Canadian citizens under this terminology, without providing for them in some way. This was part of the impetus behind the documentary film -- *of Japanese Descent*. (see chapter two)

d) December 7, 1941: Pearl Harbour

Mere days after Pearl Harbour Japanese newspapers in Canada were closed down, and Japanese Canadian fishing boats were impounded. These were seen as precautionary measures. In *Justice in Our Time*, R. Miki and C. Kobayashi state:

> These first restrictions were seen by members of the community as needless and unfounded "precautionary measure" taken by a government caught up in the war hysteria of the time; nevertheless, they believed that no further measures would be taken if they tolerated this over-reaction and reminded the Canadian government that they were, after all, Canadian citizens. (20)

Shortly after Pearl Harbour, on January 14' 1942 Order in Council PC 365 was passed, which identified a hundred-mile zone off the B.C. coast. This Order designated that any male Japanese national aged eighteen to forty-five would be sent to work on the road camps (22). Since these men were aliens the community tolerated this treatment. However, very shortly things worsened. On February 24, 1942, Order in Council PC 1486 was passed. It called for the removal of all persons of "Japanese racial origin" and this Order "gave the RCMP the power to search without warrant, enforce a dusk-to-dawn curfew, and to confiscate cars, radios, cameras, and firearms" (23). This order effectively made meaningless the rights of the niseis' Canadian citizenship. As R. Miki and C. Kobayashi point out, "The War Measures Act legalized the government actions, even though they were based on racist precepts and not necessary by military standards for national security" (24). On March 4, 1942, the B.C. Security Commission was formed and it was charged with the *evacuation*/expulsion of all Japanese Canadians away from the West Coast of Canada. Many were initially taken to Hastings Park, where the conditions were deplorable. There, families were separated. Men were sent to road camps. Some people were forced to stay in the Hastings Park *clearing site* for several months.

> Meanwhile, many Japanese nationals, especially those connected to the Japanese Liaison Committee and Etsuji Morii, remained in Vancouver. And in what many Japanese Canadians perceived to be the height of hypocrisy on the part of the government, they were even given authority to "police" those confined in Hastings Park. Morii was not only perceived by many nisei to be acting in complicity with the RCMP to secure privileges for those issei who supported him, he was also suspected of accepting bribes for doing so. An internal memo of the B.C. Security Commission stated: "It is … alleged that he [Morii] is accepting money and promising that he can use influence to secure a deferment of evacuation." (R. Miki, *Redress* 63)

Morii fulfilled the same role, in relationship to the Canadian government that the Jewish Kapo[35] fulfilled in relationship to the German concentration camp administrators and guards. Criminality is not defined moralistically, but as a relationship to the state, and criminals become floating signifiers whose relationship to power changes when they are defined as being against the state or as useful tools of the state. This is true of many criminal organizations and their national governments world wide: the Yakuza[36] and the Japanese government, the Mafia[37] and the Italian government, the Mafia [38]and the American government, and the Mafia[39] and the Russian government, to name a few. The criminal element of society is, of course, a useful tool of the state for the state to accomplish its end mission, and always a threat to the population, regardless of the state's relationship to criminal organizations at any given moment. R. Miki and C. Kobayashi point out the obvious:

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[35] Kapo was the shortened term for the *Kamaradenpolizei*, who were the prisoners in the German Concentration Camps, who were recruited by the Germans to police their fellow inmates:

> At Dachau a system of 'Kapos' was introduced – something that would be adopted across the whole concentration camp network. The Kapo system subsequently also would play an important part in the running of Auschwitz. (The term 'Kapo' appears to have derived from the Italian 'capo,' meaning 'head.') The authorities at the camp would appoint one prisoner to be 'Kapo' in each block or work 'commando,' and this inmate would have enormous power over his fellow prisoners. Not surprisingly, that power was often abused. Almost more than the SS guards, the Kapos, in moment-to-moment contact with the other prisoners, could use arbitrary behaviour to make life inside the camp intolerable. But the Kapos, too, were at risk if they failed to please their SS masters. As Himmler put it: His [the Kapo's] job is to see that the work gets done … thus he has to push his men. As soon as we are no longer satisfied with him, he is no longer a Kapo and returns to the other inmates. He knows that they will beat him to death his first night back. (Rees 7)

[36] In *Beyond the Mafia*, Sue Mahan and Katherine O'Neil explain the function of the Yakuza:

> Since the 1950s, the Yakuza have become so wealthy, diversified, and omnipresent in Japanese society that their agenda is virtually indistinguishable from that of the national government. There is a strong symbiotic relationship between the two. The Japanese Yakuza constitute a parallel universe running beneath virtually every institution and industry in the nation. They are known as the *Boryokodan*, which means 'the violent ones,' to the Japanese National Police Agency. The official membership of the *Boryokodan* groups in Japan was estimated at well over 80,000 but criminal associates may make up more than 10 times that number. (84).

[37] In post-Second-World-War Italy, "the proliferation of Mafia influence and affluence was not merely as a natural consequence of a freer market economy, or the liberality of democratic government. On the contrary, the Mafia and conservative political organizations have been able to construct a regulated environment within which commercial advantage and political power has remained in the hands of the few" (Findlay 155-6). Mafia organizations are typically conservative, and align themselves easily with right-wing political movements. The Mafia has, in many cases, been used in an anti-communist fashion by members of the state and the Christian Democrats (See Paul Ginsberg). The book *Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs and the Press* states: "CIA officer Miles Copeland wrote twenty-nine years later that had it not been for the Mafia the Communists would now be in control of Italy, so crucial had the criminal organization been in murdering labour organizers and terrorizing the political process. The CIA was also closely in league with the Vatican, itself still embroiled in its wartime alliance with the Nazis" (Cockburn and St Clair 138).

> Initially, the BC security Commission appointed Etsuji Morii, a naturalized issei, to form a "Japanese Liaison Committee," in the hopes of securing, quickly and efficiently, the co-operation of the community. They could not have made a worse choice. For many years before, Morii had been mistrusted, intensely disliked, and even feared by Japanese Canadians. He had a notorious reputation as the owner of a gambling house, and it was rumoured that he belonged to the Black Dragon Society, a Japanese nationalist underworld organization. Outraged that such an individual had been chosen to

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[38] The American CIA is known to have serious links to the American Mafia, as well as a number of other world-wide Mafia organizations. The CIA collaborated with Mafia leaders on several issues including spying in Italy during the Second-World-War, and drug cartels. There was collaboration between the CIA and the Mafia, in order to overthrow Fidel Castro. Castro, himself, was aware of the CIA relationship to the Mafia:

> Castro knew what was happening. He knew that the American government was working with the Mafia to assassinate him; to him, it was simply a replay of the 'old days' in Havana, when he had begun his program to purge the city of vice and mob chief Meyer Lansky had placed a million dollar 'bounty' on his head. Now Castro watched as the United States government broke its own laws, not for Berlin, not because of a nuclear threat from Russia, but because of Cuba, always little Cuba. (Geyer 288)

Furthermore, there is historical evidence that when Castro found out about the plot he had hired the Mafia to retaliate against Kennedy: "The CIA had contracted with the Mafia to assassinate Fidel Castro. But Rosselli had learned from his underworld connections that Castro had found out about the plot and had recruited the Mafia to retaliate against John F. Kennedy" (Anderson 106).

[39] According to Yale Richmond in *From Da to Yes : Understanding the East Europeans*, the Russian mafia's roots are in the Soviet political system, "which exercised power through criminality and violence. In this sense, the mafia has replaced the Communist Party by providing 'order' in Russia. Indeed the mafia is believed to be an alliance between criminals and former communists in the state bureaucracy, including the KGB, which has supplied many of the mafia's strong-arm henchmen" (83).

> represent them, some Japanese Canadians reacted by forming two groups: the Naturalized Canadian Japanese Association (NCJA), for the issei, and the Japanese Canadian Citizens Council (JCCC), for the nisei. Both groups advocated co-operation with the BC Security Commission, but rejected Morii as their representative. (*Justice* 34-5)

And each of these groups advocated co-operation as a measure of proving their loyalty to Canada. This is the one typical reaction – *à la* Neil Bissondath – where ethno-cultural citizens attempt to prove their loyalty to the nation, by adopting purported *Canadian* attitudes and rejecting any association with their ancestral nation/culture.[40] But despite their best efforts to prove their Canadian loyalties these organizations remained unsuccessful, leaving them in a precarious position when the Canadian government began the process of *evacuation* from the coast. Despite what the history books now recount – an (over)simplification of historical events in their retelling – it is important to recognize that Japanese Canadians, at the time of *evacuation* did not know what awaited them. The trauma caused by the fear of the unknown is something that is erased by the sterile recounting of events: narratives which most often emphasize the sanitary and scenic surrounding to which Japanese Canadians were relocated. During the war, Japanese Canadians lived in the fear of the unknown, not knowing where their relatives were, and not knowing what would become of them.

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[40] At the end of the war, when Japanese Canadians resettled in Toronto they were forced to take menial jobs that did not threaten the economic and social status of the dominant discourse. At that time, the nisei formed the Japanese Canadian Committee for Democracy (JCCD). This organization "took part in the fight against deportation, raised consciousness about citizens' rights through their newsletter of political commentary and community information, nisei Affairs (1945-47), and lobbied the government to allow Japanese Canadians to enlist in the armed forces. The issue of enlistment demonstrated the drive among the nisei to prove loyalty to Canada" (R. Miki, *Redress* 108). Many Japanese Canadian men enlisted in the armed forced after the spring of 1945, when, under pressure from the British government, the Canadian government allowed these men to enlist. The desire to prove their Canadian loyalties, would drive the Japanese Canadian community for several decades after the end of the war, as well.

> By March 23, uprooted Japanese Canadians were pouring into Vancouver from Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, and from up the coast as far north as Prince Rupert. Often given as little as 24 hours to vacate their homes, they were uncertain of their future, fearful of the defensiveness stirred up in white people by the local newspapers and no longer confident that the government would honour their citizenship rights. (R. Miki, *Redress* 63)

In the interim, internment centres were hastily being created, sometimes out of nothing, sometimes out of ghost towns. Later, once families were separated, there were persistent fears that family members would die and the surviving relatives would not be notified. Many people did die because of Tuberculosis and the harsh living conditions. Kogawa addresses these fears in *Obasan*:

> "I [Aunt Emily] remember one time Mr. Nakayama came out east to take pictures of as many nisei as he could find to prove to the parents back in the camps that their children were alive. How could they know whether the young girls working as domestics were all right – whether the young people on the farms were eating adequately – whether the boys who had left the road camps were managing in the cities? The rumours were so bad." (186-7)

The story of internment is the most popular, and the easiest to classify and contain. The reality was much more complex. Japanese Canadians experienced a variety of scenarios: road construction camps (945 men), sugar beet farms in Alberta (2,588 people), Manitoba (1,053 people), and Ontario (350 men), camps in B.C. (12, 029 people), self-supporting sites (1,161 people), special permits for approved employment (1,359 people), repatriation to Japan (42 people), uprooted prior to March 1942 (579), interned in prisoner of war camps in Ontario (699 people), held in detention in Vancouver (111 people), and held at Hastings Park hospital (105 people). This was how the Japanese Canadian population was distributed after the mass uprooting from the 100-mile zone, as of October 31, 1942 (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi 31).

After 1942, Japanese Canadians lived in a liminal state, between their old lives in B.C. and the unknown, for a period of up to seven years, until 1949. The war ended with the devastating defeat of Japan at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in 1945, but Japanese Canadians would remain subject to random acts allowed under the War Measures Act for an additional four years. Japanese Canadians were not permitted to return to the West Coast until 1949, and that regulation was strictly enforced. At least two men were sentenced to prison and hard labour for attempts to return to the coast or reclaim their land on the coastal area.[41] It is the stories of this era and the changing representations of this time period from varying perspectives that are the focus of this dissertation. Therefore, the details of evacuation will be revealed throughout the thesis in relationship to the way the dominant discourse and Japanese Canadians have narrated that time period.

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[41] According to *A Dream of Riches* "Yoshiji Takahashi of New Denver was sentenced to a year in Oakalla Prison when he returned to Mission to claim his farm. In 1948, Akihide Otsuji was sentenced to a year's hard labour for entering the coastal area" (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 138).

e) From Post-war to the Centennial: 1945 – mid-1970s

At the end of the war, as the government and the culturally dominant discourse was managing the spectacle of internment to their advantage by producing the documentary film -- *of Japanese Descent* (see Chapter Two), the abuse of civil rights was still going on in Canada. In fact, internment was only one of the abuses of human rights to take place during and after the war. The dominant discourse narrates a story of Japanese Canadian internment, whereby the present representatives of power confess the wrongdoings of their forefathers through confession and repentance, asking that the population learn from past error. At the same time, they assure the population that this sort of human rights abuse would never take place again. However, the real story of human rights abuses is hardly encapsulated by the internment story. The events of *evacuation*, in fact, were a climactic moment in Canadian history, but by no means the only or the last racist act perpetrated against Japanese Canadians. Guy Beauregard chastises critics for interpreting narratives of Japanese Canadian "internment" according to an aberration model, which is a mistreatment of the issues that minimizes the reality of human rights abuses as part of Canadian history and politics. The Canadian nation has been founded on racist rhetoric and corresponding legislation, of which the internment is only one example: the Chinese head-tax, the internment of Austro-Hungarian Canadians during the First World War, German Canadians and Italian Canadians during the Second World War, the refusal to allow the St. Louis ship of Jewish expatriates fleeing Nazi Germany to land in Canada, and the turning back of the Komagata Maru ship carrying hundreds of Sikhs in 1914. Also, the idea of internment attracts a lot of attention, but there were other, less often narrated, civil rights abuses enacted against Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. R. Miki identifies five major ways that the Japanese Canadian interment differed from the American internment, and in each case, the Canadian reaction was more severe. R. Miki writes the following about the treatment of Japanese Americans:

> - Their properties and belonging were not liquidated without the owners' consent;
> - Those incarcerated were not forced to pay for their own incarceration;
> - They could return to the coast in January 1945 and were not subject to deportation and dispersal;
> - They did not face the prospect of a "quasi-judicial" loyalty commission to deport those deemed "not fit persons"; and
> - Their country's constitution protected them from the systematic abuse on the basis of race categories that were legalized in Canada under the War Measures Act. (*Redress* 42)

Internment is an issue that is easy to contain with a simple narration. The actual events of the Second-World-War *evacuation* of Japanese Canadians were much more complex. By reducing the narrative to a simple series of events condoned by the War Measures Act, and justifying them with crisis rhetoric – "it was wartime" – the events of the wartime *evacuation* and post-war *repatriation* and *dispersal* were swept under the rug of the national narrative for several decades. Official narrative like the one perpetuated in -- *of Japanese Descent* minimized the events of the Second World War and did not acknowledge the continuing hardships of Japanese Canadians after the war's end. Mackenzie King's government even established a Cabinet Committee on Japanese Questions (CCJQ) that was charged with the issues of repatriation, relocation, and claims, but which ended up being responsible for "Formulating strategies that would defuse criticism of the dispossession of Japanese Canadians and in the process, however possible, maintain the appearance of accountability" (R. Miki, *Redress* 112). During the war, the Canadian population, overall, received little information about the events of internment. After the war, more information was available, often due to the fact that some Japanese Canadians were narrating a different story about internment, through the political actions that they were taking, which catalyzed reactionary government policies.

By January 24, 1947, Prime Minister Mackenzie King had reversed the deportation/*repatriation* orders in the House of Commons, and according to R. Miki, when that happened, "issues of compensation for economic losses, including loss of income, moved to the foreground" (*Redress* 111). Japanese Canadians, both individually and collectively, took political action and made claims for compensation. On July 18, 1947 the Bird Commission, named for Justice Henry Bird of the Supreme Court, was formed. Justice Bird quickly realized that it would be arduous and time consuming to hear all of the claims; therefore, the Bird Commission created very restricted terms of reference that only acknowledged the loss of personal property, and disregarded all other issues – economic and political (civil rights violations). Clearly, the Bird Commission was primarily concerned with the government's economic position, and as R. Miki points out, "general compensation for the uprooting would be seen as a tacit admission that Japanese Canadians had been damaged by government policy" (*Redress* 116). Therefore, only property sales were called into question, and even so, the Bird Commission would only consider claims where "neglect or lack of care by the Custodian or his staff could be legally proved" (Sunahara, *Politics* 153). This was an impossible task, because the government denied the lawyers for Japanese Canadians access to the files kept by the Custodian on the sale of Japanese Canadian properties. Therefore, no solid case could be formed against the government. The government was therefore not forced to provide fair compensation to Japanese Canadians affected by the actions of the Custodian of Enemy Property. Eventually, the commission only offered $1, 222, to 829 persons who had made claims,[42] and the large number of Japanese Canadians who had filed no official claims were awarded nothing:

> A further $150,000 in special awards was later paid on Bird's recommendation: $57,000 to the Cooperative committee for expenses exclusive of legal fees, and $93,000 in claims outside the terms of reference. Excluding corporations, the overall recovery on the claims was estimated at 56 per cent of the gross value claimed, from which, however, the claimants had to pay the legal costs the government refused to assume. The very success of that recovery proved to be the death of the claims issue. (Sunahara 159)

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[42] According to Sunahara's *Politic,* the Toronto Claimants' Committee wanted to boycott the Bird Commission's proposed settlement, because 175 owners of Vancouver properties were unhappy with the proposed settlement. However, the National Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association proposed that the community accept the proposals, because of the way that Bird's proposal saved time, "and the way in which it bolstered weak cases. Individual proceedings would have taken many years and would have produced lower overall recovery" (158). It was estimated that upon closer scrutiny, many of the cases would be thrown out, because of the lack of corroborating evidence, evidence which had been eradicated by the historical conditions and the passage of time. There was also a concern for the high issei death rates, and in the end, Japanese Canadians supported the National JCCA and not the TCC.

Furthermore, as R. Miki documents in his latest book, *Redress,* the small amount allocated to those who had made claims, came with one final cost: "Before they could receive any money, they had to agree to waive all rights to make any further claims against the government for any losses" (125). R. Miki asks several questions in his chapter on the Bird Commission: "How could the government have considered property ownership a threat to national security? Why had the Custodian of Enemy Property, entrusted to administer the properties 'as a protective measure only,' sold off everything?" (111). Regarding the Bird Commission, which acceded to grant some compensation to certain claimants only after asking the recipients, at the last moment, to sign a release form agreeing to never again bring a claim against the government, R. Miki asks, "Why had this regulation never been mentioned before?" (125). The answer to all three of these questions, is the same. Effectively, there is "a basic tension in liberal democracies. There may be formal political democracy and citizen equality in such regimes, but there is not an equivalent economic democracy and market equality" (Judson 89). According to Immanuel Wallerstein in *Historical Capitalism: With Capitalist Civilization*, once minority ethnic citizens become property owners they are capitalists and no longer serfs:

> We have noted also that the process of ethnic-group formation was integrally linked with that of labour-force formation in given states, serving as a rough code of position in the economic structures. Therefore, wherever this has occurred more sharply or circumstances have forced more acute short-term pressures on survival, the conflict between the accumulators of capital and the more oppressed segments

> of the work-force have tended to take the form of linguistic-racial-cultural struggles, since such descriptors have a high correlation with class membership. (62)

In my analysis, denial of economic compensation was aligned with the ideology of the historical Canadian governments, not only the war-time and post-war governments. Japanese Canadians had been political marginalized since their arrival in Canada, but had established themselves financially. If the dominant discourses of power were to eliminate the Japanese Canadian segment of the population as a viable part of the body politic, it was necessary to undermine their position within Canadian liberal democracy, the basis of which is private property. Therefore, the logical next step, after violating the political rights of these citizens, was to violate their economic position within the public sphere. They had not been acknowledged by way of the franchise as equal citizens, and without the vote they had been consistently denied other rights of full citizenship. Despite the fact that they did not earn equal pay for equal work, they were slowly establishing themselves economically, irrespective of all the legislation passed in an attempt to limit their viability. Their civil rights were abused when they were *evacuated* from the coast and sent to road camps, internment camps, and POW camps, or farms across central Canada. Their civil rights were again betrayed with the repatriation legislations that were only possible because of the War Measures Act, which was not immediately lifted at the end of the war:

> With the capitulation of Japan in August 1945, the federal government sought to make those repatriation requests binding. In November 1945 the cabinet sought from Parliament the power to deport any resident of

> Canada, and were refused. Six weeks later – two weeks before the powers of the War Measures Act were to expire – the cabinet granted itself that power by order-in-council under the War Measures Act, and ordered the deportation of 10,000 Japanese Canadians. (Sunahara, *Politics* 163)

The goal of the government was to remove all traces of the Japanese Canadian community from British Columbia, whether that was to be through deportation, banning their return to the coast until April 1, 1949 and/or by liquidating their assets so that there was nothing left to return to.

While Japanese Canadians were granted the vote in 1949,[43] and with it permitted certain privileges – access to previously prohibited professions, and the freedom to move freely throughout the country – the government was not willing to compensate them for their economic losses. The rights of citizenship seemed the greater victory at the time; Japanese Canadians had been fighting for the rights of citizenship since Tomekichi Homma had tried to get his name on the voters' list in 1900:

> The restriction on moving back to the west coast had been lifted on April 1, 1949, and appeared to be restored as "Canadians." They had gone, to use the language of the CCJC's pamphlet, from "refugees" to "citizens." The CCJC's success in "making democracy work" was evident in its work against deportation and in support of property

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[43] According to *A Dream of Riches*, Japanese Canadians received the federal vote first, followed the next year by the provincial B.C. vote: " Federally, the Japanese were granted the franchise on June 15, 1948. Finally on March 7, 1949, the last of the wartime restrictions were lifted and the Japanese Canadians were free to vote in federal elections anywhere in Canada" (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 138).

> claims. Token compensation, while admittedly inadequate, was at least some recognition of the losses. (R. Miki, *Redress* 125).

What Japanese Canadians could not know without hindsight is that in accepting merely token compensation, they were gaining only token acknowledgement of what they had lost monetarily and emotionally. Tokenism is part of the way that Multiculturalism is enacted. It provides a consumable staging of ethnic acknowledgment. Liberal democracy walks a fine line between the idealistic notions of political democracy that allow for the equal participation of every citizen in the political process, where each citizen has one vote, and that vote bears the same weight in the decision about who the political leaders of the nation will be. However, in a liberal democracy, the notion that each citizen should have the same amount of private property is outrageous. David Hume argued that the equal distribution of property "would 'destroy all subordination' and 'weaken extremely the authority of the magistracy.' He then concludes that its very proposal is 'pernicious' and deserving of the 'severest punishment'" (McMurtry 8). The realities are that even Greek democracy was not universal. It excluded women and slaves. Slaves, in particular, kept the system running. Effectively, the slave-based economy of the first democracy set the stage for all future democracies. Liberal democracy became synonymous with private property and ownership, and democracy serves the interest of "capital:" money used to produce more money. Benjamin Franklin is credited for having said that those who own the country ought to run it. As such, liberal democracies such as France and America, which were theoretically founded on principles of universal human rights – liberty, equality, and fraternity – were actually interested in the more practical interests of accumulating private property and then maintaining those interests by whatever political means necessary. At different moments in our political history, the political and economic aspects of liberal democracy have been weighted differently, depending on the social context. In 1949, getting the vote was a major coup for Japanese Canadians, because the rights of full citizenship in a liberal democracy that had been built on the labour of many immigrant groups that were regarded as temporary citizens in the socio-economic (and certainly not political) landscape, caused Japanese Canadians to move from the position of temporary residents to permanent citizens. They were no longer being paid lower wages for equal work. They were the serfs, in the new feudal system – capitalism – now run by the bourgeoisie. Historically, capitalism was built on the cheap labour of certain groups of people. Canada is no different. As Immanuel Wallerstein argues in *Historical Capitalism*, minority "'ethnic groups' are sizeable groups of people to whom were reserved certain occupational/economic roles in relation to other such groups living in geographic proximity. The outward symbolization of such labour-force allocation was the distinctive 'culture' of the ethnic group – its religion, its language, its 'values,' its particular set of everyday behaviour patterns"(76). Citizenship, in theory, should have allowed Japanese Canadian nisei to work for equal pay, in whatever domain they desired. However, their citizenship was limited by the fact that they did not have the franchise, and the full rights associated with citizenship.

Historically, in Canada, there has been a desire to deny the full rights of citizenship to those deemed inassimilable. Again, parallels can be drawn between the treatment of the Japanese Canadian population and the First Nations communities:

> To the extent that Aboriginal cultural difference historically possessed legal significance in Canada, it served as a reason for denying Aboriginal people rights to own and exercise authority over ancestral territories, rights otherwise guaranteed by treaty, rights to vote, rights to engage in cultural practices, and rights to educate their children according to traditional ways, as well as a host of other injustices. Aboriginal people were actively urged – indeed, legally coerced – to abandon their cultures and to assimilate with non-Aboriginal society. The nineteenth-century precursor to the federal Indian Act, for example, provided for the 'civilization' and voluntary 'enfranchisement' of status Indian men of good character as determined by a board of examiners. Upon enfranchisement, individuals would no longer possess Indian status under the Act. They would instead acquire the rights of non-Aboriginal citizens and receive individual possession of up to fifty acres of land within the reserve and a per capita share in the principal of treaty annuities and other band moneys. When Aboriginal men refused to seek enfranchisement voluntarily, the Act was amended to make enfranchisement mandatory for all status Indian men who obtained higher education. (Macklem 56-7)

These legislations very clearly underline the value of private property. If an Indian man was convinced of the notion or value of private property, then he could be coerced into giving up his rights as an Aboriginal person, and would be given the rights of a white citizen. The irony, of course, is that the reward for a rejection of ancestral culture under the paradigm relied on a pre-existing adoption of the western value of private property, because private property was the reward for assimilation, and that reward would only convince an aboriginal person to abdicate their ancestral rights, if they had already adopted the beliefs of the colonial nations. However, if they maintained the Aboriginal status, they did not get the right to vote in federal elections until 1960.

The rights denied Aboriginal peoples in Canada, and the historically prejudicial immigration legislation, provide some of the historical context for why Japanese Canadians were easily evacuated from the coast.[44] Understanding, however, the context of the internment highlights several issues: (1) The internment was not an anomaly of Canadian history. It was, in fact, just one of many instances of social management enacted against less powerful non-dominant individuals and communities by a dominant discourse that was trying to actualize its goal to create a British society in Canada, while negotiating the complexities of the labour shortages necessary to achieve that goal. (2) The Canadian government's choice to liquidate Japanese Canadian property, and force Japanese Canadians to support themselves once incarcerated – something the Americans did not do – was part of a larger plan to

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[44] More complete histories on the issues of racism and legislation can be found in books such as *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (2000) by Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, and *Not One of the Family: Foreign Domestic Workers in Canada* (1997), by Abigail B. Bakan.

eradicate them as citizens, in a liberal democratic society, where political citizenship is only one component of the access to power, and the other is private property: the inherent basis of liberal democracy. Interning Japanese Canadians and violating their political rights only accomplished half the task of *evacuating* them as a viable segment of the population. Liquidation of private property and economic devastation ensured that they would not present an economic threat to the powerful elites of the country before they could be *repatriated* or assimilated into the nation's discourses of power.

For Japanese Canadians the 1950s and 1960s were a period of shame, silence, and assimilation, and it is through ethno-cultural literature that the traumas of this history are revealed. Any semblance of a Japanese Canadian community was shattered by the forced diaspora at the end of the Second World War: under the War Measures Act, the Canadian government was empowered to order *repatriation* or settlement east of the Rockies.[45] R. Miki has identified the decades of the 1950s and 1960s as "not so much a simple repression of memory but [...] a disarticulated history of loss and displacement" ("Turning" 36). In 1945 the orders to disperse throughout the country, or to leave if one did not like that option (repatriation) made it clear that dissent was not going to be tolerated by the government. This heavy-handed attitude left Japanese Canadians in a difficult situation, where survival was paramount, and political resistance under the War Measures Act was clearly not going to be permitted. Then, in 1947-1948, when Japanese Canadians thought that the Department of Justice was providing them the forum to speak out against the wartime transgression committed again them, the Bird Commission silenced Japanese Canadians, through the unjust handling of their cases, which showed that the balance of justice weighed more favourable on the side of maintaining the economic position and political facade of elected power, than delivering true justice to the citizens that the government theoretically represented. Japanese Canadians were wary of dissenting because in 1942, anyone who had resisted *evacuation* procedures or mass-internment had been imprisoned (without charges being laid).[46] Passive resistance *à la Gandhi* was not effective either,[47] because the Canadian mainstream did not acknowledge the struggles of the citizenry of colour. Japanese Canadians, therefore, were not in a position – economic, political, or social – to have a voice.

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[45] In Ottawa, on February 13, 1945 the "Notice to All Persons of Japanese Racial Origin Having Reference To Making Application For Voluntary Repatriation To Japan" was issued by the Department of Labour and signed by Humphrey Mitchell: Minister of Labour. The notice offered free passage to Japan for those who wished to voluntarily apply. In Vancouver, on March 12, 1945 the Department of Labour issued the "Notice To All Persons of Japanese Racial Origin Now Resident in British Columbia," which was signed by T.B. Pickersgill: Commissioner of Japanese Placement. There is an ominously threatening note about the notice, which encourages settlement east of the Rockies; it was blatantly stated that if Japanese Canadians followed orders it would be seen as "the best evidence of their intentions to co-operate with the Government policy of dispersal," and the notice also clearly stated that refusal to move eastward "may be regarded at a later date as a lack of co-operation with the Canadian Government in carrying out its policy of dispersal" (Miki and Kobayashi 48). Pickersgill made it quite clear that if Japanese Canadians did not want to resettle in Eastern Canada, they should opt to *repatriate*. These choices were a catch-twenty-two, however; if they chose to follow orders, it was seen as co-operation, but there was also the underlying belief that if they were somehow guilty of what they had been accused.

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[46] This historical behavior is the model for the contemporary treatment of Arab-Muslim men detained with Security Certificates, such as Mohmoud Jaballah, Mohamed Zeki Mahjoub, Hassan Almrei, Mohamed Harkat, and Adil Charkaoui; these men cannot defend themselves, because they have not been charged with any crimes and they are denied access to the files the government has compiled on them, on the basis of security, which means they cannot defend themselves. Because the nation never dealt with the internments of the Second-World-War, specifically the "race" motivated internment of Japanese Canadians, that history can be repeated.

[47] In 1947-1948 in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan a group of Japanese Canadian men protested their forced resettlement in Saskatchewan. Originally they were more militant in their approach. They refused to settle in Saskatchewan, and they wanted to return to B.C. or be deported to Japan with compensation for their losses. After being evicted from the hostel on March 3, 1948, where they had been living since July 1946, 38 of the 59 remaining residents of the hostel decided to camp in tents outside the hostel in passive protest. In July another temporary housing situation was found for these protesters, but two men refused to leave, and they were joined by a third man on the weekends. Their passive protest carried on until November 27, 1948, when the threat of dropping temperatures motivated the RCMP to remove the men for fear that their freezing to death would bring have serious repercussions for the authorities. Nevertheless, these protests and demands for compensation were ineffective because there was no media or political attention given to the issue and these protestors received no support from anyone, including Japanese Canadians across the country (Miki, *Redress* 135).

By the 1950s, Japanese Canadians had been politically "managed" by the *evacuation* and subsequent ban for the West Coast that lasted until 1949; they were disillusioned about their worth as citizens and the inherent value of the theories of democracy, as practiced in Canada. Japanese Canadians were financially devastated by the liquidation of their property. Finally, they were shattered socially when any sense of community that might have been established in the internment camps, road camps, prisoner of war camps, or on the beet farms in the Prairies was broken by the second relocation forced on these individuals and their families. Japanese Canadians had existed in a liminal state since the arrival of the first Japanese man to Canada in 1877: they were residents and citizens of the country, but they did not enjoy the full rights of citizenship. Certain aspects of public life were denied them because of their disenfranchised status, and racism: the former a product, in part, of the latter. After the Second World War, they were not granted the vote until April 1, 1949, so they continued to exist in a liminal state; they had the full rights of citizenship, but that did not change the fact that they were not regarded in the public sphere as full Canadian citizens. In other words, political changes did not impact the life of the common citizenry, and therefore, change had not really taken place on any practical level.

Japanese Canadians, in many cases, accepted an attitude of shikata-ga nai, which expresses an attitude of resignation, roughly translated as "it cannot be helped." So little discussion about the wartime events went on in the public sphere during the 1950s and 1960s that the history books dealing with this collectivity typically skip from approximately 1949 to the mid-1970s. What is obvious is that

Japanese Canadian nisei worked hard to establish themselves in their community across the country.

f) *Re-membering Era*

From the 1940s to the 1970s Japanese Canadians resettled across the country, educated their children, and reasserted themselves as economically viable, all the while suppressing the memories of the *evacuation*. In *Broken Entries: Race, Subjectivity, Writing*, R. Miki writes about the *silence & forgetting* of that period:

> By the mid-to-late 1950s, when the exile from the coast was receding into history, the integration process, like some magical potion, was working its wonders, transforming all of us, through the educational roadway, into mainstream kids – at least, on the outside, because inside, the estrangement, the dislocation, remained a nagging footnote to matters yet to be resolved. Somewhere buried within was some reserve of curiosity, some seed of resistance, some dream of justice that wanted – and that would eventually demand – the unfolding of a narrative. (20)

The re-membering would begin to occur in the late 1960s, and the cultural products of that re-membering would begin to appear at the end of the 1970s and the early 1980s, by which time, *Multiculturalism*[48] was part of Canadian jargon, Japanese Canadians were considered a model minority, and the idea of redress was gaining momentum. Like most revolutions, the beginning was quiet. There were a number of events and political undercurrents, all of which contributed to the rising interest in

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[48] This is capitalized and in italics, because practical and theoretical multiculturalism are simultaneously being referenced.

Japanese Canadian history, and the injustice of internment: the impact of the American Civil Rights Movement on Canadian politically minded youth caused them to call into question the relationship of ethno-cultural groups to the nation and the dominant discourse. Japanese Americans had organized a redress committee, which lobbied for individual compensation and a community trust fund to "promote the social, cultural, and educational interests of Japanese Americans" (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Justice* 38). The early 1970s narrations of the dominant discourse by Pierre Berton, and the NFB seemed an invitation (or taunt, depending on the perspective) to Japanese Canadians to begin discussions about the events of the Second World War. In Ottawa, in 1977, the Japanese Canadian Centennial Project (JCCP) mounted a photo history of Japanese Canadians entitled "A Dream of Riches." In 1978, this photo exhibit was published as a tri-lingual book, for which all the entries are written in English, Japanese, and French (in that order, respectively, for each caption). The national tour of the photo exhibit, which started in Ottawa, helped stimulate interest in Japanese Canadian history.

In those same years (1976-77), in Toronto, the National Redress Committee had begun initial discussions. In 1977 the Reparation Committee was formed, and in 1978 they created a questionnaire, held a few public meetings in Toronto, wrote articles for the *New Canadian* and the *Canada Times*, and in the late 1970s the committee wrote its position paper, which was presented at the NAJC meeting in November 1979 (R. Miki, *Redress* 172). The committee was actively engaged in issues of redress, before they were part of the public conscience.

g) *Redress Era*

Other events of significance during those early years built momentum for redress, including the 40 year reunion for those Japanese Canadians who had been uprooted from the Fraser Valley. Then, based on the Second-World-War government documents made available to the public in the mid-1970s, Sunahara began researching *The Politics of Racism*, which was published in 1981. The renewed interest in Japanese Canadian history coincided with the release of Second-World-War government files that had not been available to the public for the thirty-five years since the end of the war. These documents, letters, and personal files, revealed what most Japanese Canadians believed: "the actions of the government towards Japanese Canadians were motivated by racism and politics, and not by national security" (A. Miki 13). Also, in 1981 Kogawa had published the first Japanese Canadian-authored novel, *Obasan*, which tells the story of the devastating post-war repercussions of the Second World War for one Japanese Canadian family from the perspective of Naomi Nakane. This novel had unpredicted ripple effects. (See Chapter Three.) That same year, members of JCCP (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project) and other interested parties joined together to form the Redress Committee, with the intent to educate people on the wartime injustices suffered by Japanese Canadians, and to advocate redress. By 1982 the idea of Japanese Canadian redress began to gain momentum when the US Congress established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, and the Canadian media began to take an interest in the subject, after hearing the sympathetic testimonials of American Japanese. In 1982, a CBC news documentary narrated by Russ Froese, entitled "A Call for Justice", was produced for the CBC TV program *The Journal*; R. Miki was one of three Japanese Canadian sansei from the JCCP group who appeared, along with Randy Enomoto and Cassandra Kobayashi, on the program. According to R. Miki, this documentary was "prompted by the demand for redress" (R. Miki, *Redress* 142), and its representation of the Japanese Canadian experience provided a "tacit endorsement of some form of redress for what are acknowledged as injustices" (R. Miki, *Redress* 142). According to R. Miki, this moment was a crucial turning point in the redress movement, and the power of the media was immediate and transformative. Previous to this moment, the JCCP had been trying to discuss the idea of redress with the older generations of Japanese Canadians, who, for the most part, felt the idea was grandiose and impossible, since the government of the 1940s had so effectively betrayed their confidence. While Enomoto, C. Kobayashi, and R. Miki were not elected or appointed representatives of the community, they were approached to discuss redress for "A Call for Justice" and eventually agreed because the producers had apparently had difficulty finding Japanese Canadians willing to discuss the issue. The JCCP was appealing to the CBC because they had taken an activist stance and had recently published the pamphlet *Redress for Japanese Canadians* which advocated both individual and community compensation.

While the program was riddled with inaccuracies,[49] their appearance created an aura around the idea of redress that radically transformed public opinion on the

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[49] Miki writes:

> The three of us who appeared were not only misidentified as members of a "Sansei Redress Committee," but viewers were also led to believe that we spoke for the "association representing 45,000 Japanese Canadians" who would be going to Ottawa the following spring "to make their case for compensation." In this strange fashion, a powerful public fiction was generated that would soon have repercussions

issue, creating a momentum the small group had previously struggled and failed to incite. R. Miki writes:

> The next day I got a phone call from my mother telling me that "redress" was the buzz word among all her friends. Everyone was beginning to wonder, she said, about the prospect of a settlement with the government. The sudden impact of the mainstream media was incredible. It was as if Japanese Canadians were being jolted awake by the public airing of their wartime story – now supported by a respected national institution, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. (*Redress* 148)

The reception of and reaction to "A Call for Justice" is, of course, in contrast to the 1970s TV program "Exodus of the Japanese," or the 1975 NFB film *Enemy Alien*, both of which end ambiguously demanding no action. In "Exodus of the Japanese," the narrator, Pierre Berton ends on the following note:

> For the Japanese in Canada, the exodus of 1942 changed the course of history for better, for worse, and forever.
>
> For all Canadians, it was a bitter reminder that we carry seeds of envy and contempt that grow swiftly whenever we are too frightened to be fair. (Patton 44)

The NFB film, *Enemy Alien*, ends by stating that it "is important that the story of hardship and eventual triumph should be remembered" (*Enemy Alien*). However, there is no call to action. The film merely glorifies the trials and triumphs of the

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in the international networks of the "association" the CBC had referred to – the National Association of Japanese Canadians. (R. Miki, *Redress* 147) silent/silenced Mrs. Horiouchi, and the community she represents. This is in contrast to "A Call for Justice," which took a provocative stance on the historical injustices of the Second-World-War government and did not encourage apathy, but rather, according to R. Miki, supported and encouraged redress.

This documentary also created conflict between the members of the JCCP of Vancouver, the NAJC in Toronto, and the NAJC's National Redress Committee. The Vancouver group and the Toronto group had not been working together and were little aware of the other's work on redress issues at the time the documentary aired. There had been some minimal exchanges between the JCCP Redress Committee and the NAJC. For example, the redress pamphlet *Redress for Japanese Canadians* that the JCCP had published after the two community forums of 1983 was widely distributed, but the activities of the Vancouver JCCP were locally focused. Being on *The Journal*, however, made the Vancouver activists – as they became known almost immediately after the documentary aired – look more impressive in scope than was the reality of the situation. The follow up to the broadcast created a media sensation that transcended national borders and gave coverage to the issue in the U.S. and in Europe.[50] However, it was another media product that threatened to undermine the Japanese Canadian fight for redress, before it had even gotten off the ground.

There was no love lost on February 14, 1983, when *Toronto Star* newspaper reporter Joe Serge wrote an article entitled "Japanese Canadians Seek $50 Million for War Uprooting," and his main source in this article and subsequent articles was named as George Imai. George Imai was the chair of the National Redress Committee, which was a subcommittee of the NAJC (The National Association of

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[50] Roy Miki outlines the media coverage of redress in his book *Redress*: pp. 148-50

Japanese Canadians) George Imai's negotiations for a redress settlement did not appear to be based on any kind of community consensus. The president of the NAJC, Gordon Kadota, was only about to embark on a trip to meet with various Japanese Canadian communities across the country.

As described by R. Miki in *Redress*, the basic conflict was that George Imai was speaking on behalf of a community with whom he had not consulted. In other words, his own views were being perpetuated as those of Japanese Canadians; effectively he was misrepresenting Japanese Canadian views and acting as a totalitarian leader. Imai asked for an apology and community compensation to form a community foundation. In R. Miki's estimation, this request was out of time: "Had such a proposal been issued in the 1970s, for instance during the 1977 centennial year, there might have been cause for excitement, even hope that the trauma of the war years might be resolved. Instead this mode of going public signalled a crisis in leadership" (151). Japanese Canadians would have been more receptive to such a proposal in 1977, the one-hundredth anniversary celebration of Manzo Nagano, the first immigrant to arrive in Canada, since the issue of redress was in its formative stage. However, by 1983 the situation had changed considerably, since by that time, the U.S. Commission had awarded each Japanese American internee a redress sum of 20,000 American dollars. By this date, the Canadian government responded to George Imai as a moderate leader, likely because his requests were so muted, considering the political climate of the day and the parallel of events that had been transpiring between the U.S. government and Japanese Americans. Vancouver's JCCP Redress Committee was identified by Jim Fleming, the Multiculturalism

Minister, as militant and not representative of the Japanese Canadian community, "that is largely reserved and moderate . . . largely satisfied. . . . A bitter public battle that invites further ill-feeling or humiliation for the Japanese Canadian community is madness!" (qtd. in *Redress* 152).

What ensued was a public dialogue often staged by the media, both the major media venues and the community-based media outlets. *New Canadian* and the *Canada Times*, both Japanese Canadian newspapers, began to publish letters and articles about redress. There were several camps of thought in the Japanese Canadian community: the Toronto-based Sodan-kai, the Toronto-based National Association of Japanese Canadians and the National Redress Committee, the Vancouver-based Japanese Canadian Centennial Project Redress Committee, and the Vancouver-based Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association. The Sodan-kai was predominantly concerned with educating the public about redress, and did not hold a position on redress when the group was formed in 1982. This group was also responsible for the publication of the short-lived *RedressNews*, started in October 1983. According to R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, this was an important publication: "At the time, while the two community papers, the *New Canadian* and the *Canada Times*, were publishing hostile and misinformed articles on the NAJC, this newsletter was an important vehicle for publishing up-to-date redress news and for involving Toronto Japanese Canadians in the movement" (66). It threatened the viability of a redress campaign, and while the community was highly divided, there was a need for strong leadership in order to create an aura of solidarity around the community. The (pre)-Second-World-War Japanese Canadian community had not been recognized as a heterogeneous group of people, which made wartime stereotyping and categorization an easy and effective method of propaganda; this was one of the factors that facilitated the internment. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Japanese Canadians had enough access to power to present a plethora of voices, and ironically, it was this that almost failed them.

George Imai, claiming to represent the desires of Japanese Canadians, had been negotiating the terms of redress with Jim Fleming, the then Multiculturalism Minister. Multiculturalism, however, is a relatively weak area of the Canadian state. Imai and the National Redress Committee had been awarded $103,000, which had been intended to pay for a questionnaire and a telephone poll of Japanese Canadians, to collect data on Japanese Canadian views about the Second-World-War *evacuation* and to determine the ramification of those historical events. However, the questionnaire was biased, received little response except from the Toronto area's mostly NRC members, and the telephone poll was never completed. By 1983, tensions were running high, with many people feeling that George Imai was in too great a rush, and was not adequately representing the views of the Japanese Canadian community; rather, people felt that he was pushing forward based on his own perception of how the community should be compensated. Eventually, the situation climaxed at the Prince Hotel Crisis on Labour Day Weekend 1983, when George Imai resigned and left the hotel after a motion was passed to establish the National Redress Council. Leading up to that vote, Imai had been faced with debate and hostile resistance to his attitude that the community had to act fast, and should only ask for community compensation to found the Japanese Canadian foundation. Following this event, there was a lot of discussion in the community, both at the hotel directly afterwards and in the Japanese Canadian newspapers, *New Canadian* and the *Canada Times*. *New Canadian* was more moderate, representing opposing views; the *Canada Times*, however, was supportive of Imai and his followers and highly critical of the Sodan-kai and the JCCP Redress Committee.

By 1984, there had been much heated debate about what had transpired at the Prince Hotel, and how the community should proceed; the future of any potential redress campaign was uncertain, because of internal community divisions. Some saw the resignation of the NRC as a conspiracy of the JCCP Redress Committee and the Sodan-kai (R. Miki, *Redress* 164). Finally, however, in January 1984, representatives from across the country met in Winnipeg, and Art Miki (running against Jack Oki) won the presidential election, and Oki became vice-president of the NAJC (National Association of Japanese Canadians). At that same meeting, it was decided that the NAJC would assume responsibility for redress, eliminating the necessity for the National Redress Council. A new NRC was formed and Imai became Chair, with Elmer Hara (his opponent) as vice-chair. The NRC's role was to provide recommendations to the NAJC. It was also decided, at that January meeting, to seek official redress. That year, the NAJC wrote the formal brief for the federal government, entitled *Democracy Betrayed: Redress for Japanese Canadians.* However, on the day that the committee met with Jack Murta, Multiculturalism Directorate, to begin "what was ostensibly a process of negotiation" (R. Miki, *Redress* 168), Jack Oki and George Imai sabotaged the NAJC by staging a press conference declaring that they were representing the silent majority of Japanese Canadians:

> Not foreseeable in January was another press conference held on the same day that *Democracy Betrayed* was released in Ottawa. There, in a direct affront to the NAJC, Jack Oki and George Imai appeared as the spokespersons of the "Japanese Canadian National Redress Committee of Survivors" and condemned the NAJC. Setting themselves up as a moderate group who spoke on behalf of the "silent majority," a posture playing on the image of Japanese Canadians as the model minority – quiet, unassuming and grateful to their country – Oki and Imai claimed that by opposing individual compensation they wanted to avoid a "backlash" from white Canadians. They asked the government to accept their proposal for an acknowledgement of injustice and some form of compensation through a group or foundation. This had been Imai's position in 1983. (R. Miki, *Redress* 168-9)

As R. Miki points out, this press conference made the divisions in Japanese Canadian attitudes very public, but this negative public attention was just part of increased media attention to the issue of redress, which was making it part of the public consciousness, and which was also creating a transformation in the attitudes of Japanese Canadians. 1984 became an important year for the redress campaign and for Japanese Canadians to reflect on their history, and in some cases to discover the untold histories of their families. It would have been around this time that Midi

Onodera would have begun conceptualizing her film *The Displaced View*, which bookends the *redress era*.

Imai would continue to undermine NAJC work, and to organize a subversive redress campaign that favoured immediate acknowledgement with a community fund. He clearly had some relationship with the Canadian government at the time. Men such as Jim Fleming and David Collenette (Minister in charge of the Multiculturalism Directorate under the Trudeau-era government) were in communication with Imai, and he did not always report these communications to the Japanese Canadian community.[51] Imai was adamant that acknowledgment and redress would take place under the Trudeau government, and he remained undeterred, even when Trudeau – the prime minister who had invoked the War Measures Act during the October Crisis and had apologized to the Japanese, while on a diplomatic visit in Tokyo, for the internment of Japanese in Canada (which did not acknowledge Japanese Canadians as Canadian citizens, but Japanese citizens) – fervently rejected Recommendation 33 of the *Equality Now!* report which states: "The Parliament of Canada should officially acknowledge the mistreatment accorded to the Japanese [*sic*] in Canada during and after World War II and the Government of Canada should undertake negotiations to redress these wrongs" (qtd. in R. Miki, *Redress* 177-8). The most crucial point that R. Miki makes in relationship to Imai's stance on "Acknowledgment First" and his desire to get a group fund is that Imai was reacting to the political position of the early 1980s Liberal government, which was virtually the same as the racist wartime government. R. Miki points out that Imai and his followers wanted a settlement, but were ever fearful that the prejudices of and virulent racism of the Second World War would resurface if they asked for individual compensation. Furthermore, in being awarded group compensation, Imai and followers were reacting to the fact that the government had seen them as a group during the war, and that was to their detriment. R. Miki points out the ironies of the attitudes adopted by Imai and his followers:

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[51] In ***Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice*** Roy Miki questions the degree to which Imai was in contact with the Liberal government. The implication is that there was a strong relationship between the Imai camp and those officials concerned with Multiculturalism, but Miki cannot prove the intimacy of that relationship. What he does prove is that the language of government documentation and Imai camp documentation was very similar; The government's *Equality Now!* report contained ideas in line with Imai's 1979 "Reparations Report," as well as similar phraseology: for details see "Chapter 7: Nineteen Eighty-Four Defining the Redress Movement" in Miki's book, *Redress* (specifically pages 176-9). Further evidence that Imai was in contact with these government ministers, without informing the community of the on-going discussions, is the fact that government ministers referenced their dealings with him:

> In one newspaper article, Justice Minister Mark MacGuigan disclosed that that he had engaged in an "exchange of letters" with Japanese Canadian representatives. In the same article, Jim Fleming admitted that he had discussed the issue of compensation with Imai. In his reports to the NAJC, however, Imai did not cite government correspondence. Nevertheless, he was able to secure a large grant in 1983 to establish a redress position to present to the government in the same year. (Miki, *Redress* 177)

> In treating Japanese Canadians primarily as a group, and not as individuals, the NRC reproduced the logic of the government's decision to uproot individuals according to their association with "the Japanese race." It is ironic that the government was so convincing in its categorization that the NRC adopted it 40 years later. (R. Miki, *Redress* 176-77)

I would argue that Imai and his followers, who embodied the ethic of the model minority citizen desirous of acceptance precipitated by assimilation and economic success, were being recuperated by the Trudeau-era regime in the same manner as the Second-World-War Mackenzie King/Ian Mackenzie government recuperated the Enemy Alien and criminal Etsuji Morii and his followers.

Imai's own logic of group compensation was aligned with the government mentality later espoused by the Progressive Conservative Mulroney government in the Crombie-stage of negotiations; David Crombie publicly declared that he was against individual compensation for Japanese Canadians because they had been interned as a group and should therefore be compensated as a group: "In effect, he was espousing the very injustice that lay behind the government's actions in 1942" (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi 107). Redress negotiated a fine line between creating a group identity in order to achieve its goals, and maintaining the notion of individual citizenry to avoid being recuperated, yet again, by an all-encompassing identity pre-defined by the dominant discourse.

In 1984, the government almost succeeded in cheaply and effectively recuperating Japanese Canadians, when they made an offer that expressed a language of regret, rather than that of acknowledgement; the government tried to solve the Japanese Canadian problem with a token five million dollar settlement to fund a Justice Institute for all Canadians. Art Miki, on behalf of the NAJC rejected this offer, but Imai subversively planned a representative faction to appear in the House of Commons to legitimize Collenette's offer. This time he had gone too far. The NRC was dissolved almost immediately via a conference call vote, and with it Imai was disempowered. This solidified community tensions:

> Removing the NRC from the NAJC triggered a new crisis among Japanese Canadians in Toronto and brought into the open many disputes that had been brewing since early 1983. The resulting turmoil in this major NAJC centre caused splits that struck to the very heart of

> the emotional turmoil unleashed by redress. It was in this cauldron that new forms of collective identity would emerge. (R. Miki, *Redress* 185)

According to R. Miki, however, Collenette's offer was a crucial moment in the redress movement, because the sting of the insult – the offer of regret without acknowledgement or a decent monetary settlement – motivated the community to continue their struggle for redress (188).

The redress movement brought up a lot of painful memories and repeated historical patterns: Imai's recuperation was not unlike that of Etsuji Morii, intergeneration difference still existed in the community, political differences were acute, and the struggles of the redress movement very much embodied the heterogeneous nature of a community that had been controlled through the strategic manipulation of the homogeneous nature of the community in whatever ways best served the powers-that-be. Suddenly, in 1984 the differences between Japanese Canadian had to be negotiated in order to create a unified image: the impression of solidarity.

When Collenette offered regret (instead of acknowledgement), and a 5 million dollar grant for a Canadian Foundation for Racial Justice, the NAJC directly rejected it. Shortly thereafter Trudeau, who was staunchly against Japanese Canadian redress because he argued that it was legal under the War Measures Act, was succeeded by John Turner who called an election. The change in leadership brought with it a change in the dynamic of redress. The Liberals lost the majority and Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives took power. On November 21, 1984 the

NAJC submitted the brief *Democracy Betrayed: The Case for Redress* to the Mulroney government. Jack Murta, the first Minister of Multiculturalism under Mulroney, unsuccessfully threatened to put an end to the redress campaign and made false statements to the media that were reported in the *Globe and Mail.*[52] Murta was stubbornly resistant to the demands of the NAJC.

Then, on December 15, 1984 the NAJC council met with Doug Bowie, Orest Kruhlak, and Anne Scotton; these government officials agreed that the federal government would participate in a consultation process to negotiate with the NAJC the official language of acknowledgement, the amount of monetary compensation, and the various options available to prevent similar abuses of human rights in future. However, talks with Jack Murta quickly disintegrated; it was clear that there was ill-will, because arbitrary deadlines were imposed in order to hasten a settlement, which was not satisfactory to the NAJC: Murta had offered a six million dollar educational trust fund, which was virtually the same as what the previous Liberal government had offered. Murta also denied the request for an investigation into the losses of the community. However, Price Waterhouse agreed to do the study for a nominal fee. While political and economic negotiations carried on for a number of years, one of the most important events was the Price Waterhouse Study,[53] conducted to determine the losses to the Japanese Canadian community. The results of this study gave economic value to the redress claim.

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[52] On November 22, 1984 the *Globe and Mail* reported that the "older Japanese Canadians, the ones who were actually involved in the uprooting for the most part don't want compensation." According to Cassandra Kobayashi and Roy Miki, "this theme would be played out for a number of years by the government in their attempts to discredit the NAJC as the legitimate voice of Japanese Canadians" (79).

[53] In 1985 Jack Murta, minister in charge of Multiculturalism Directorate, denied the NAJC's request for a losses study. However, the Vancouver branch of the Price Waterhouse accounting firm was contacted about conducting the study. Phil Barter, a senior partner, was sympathetic to the Japanese Canadian wartime experience, because of his own personal relationship to the displacement of the community; he had Japanese Canadian friends who had been *evacuated* from the coast (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Justice* 92). The study was concluded approximately a year later and the results were

Starting in 1984 with heightened public and media awareness about redress, several years were spent re-membering the stories of *evacuation* and creating a language of redress. This was an important era for the creation of a Japanese Canadian history, which resulted in a narration of identity. Where the community had never been homogeneous, and was even less so now that the post-war dispersal had spread the Japanese Canadian population out across the country (despite the fairly high populations in Vancouver and Toronto), one of the projects of redress was to create a virtual community that could span the geographical and geo-physical differences between individuals. As Guy Beauregard acknowledges, the community moulded an identity for the purpose of redress: "The emphasis Sunahara and Miki place on the events that began with the uprooting had obvious strategic value for the National Association of Japanese Canadians as it pushed for a negotiated redress settlement with the federal government" ("After Obasan"12). The narrative created by the community to define itself did create a cohesive identity that the NAJC could defend as part of a political narrative. However, that identity would need to be rewritten once redress had been achieved, because it was a simplistic narrative of community cohesiveness necessary for media sound-bites and political dialogue.

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released on May 8, 1986. The study did not account for losses due to interrupted education. However, it concluded that the economic losses to the community totaled approximately $443,139,000 in 1986 Canadian dollars. Income loss equaled $333,040,000. The loss of Fraser Valley farmland equaled $49,314,000. Other property losses equaled $40, 986,000. Losses in Fishing assets totaled $10,350,000. Losses for businesses equaled $7,627,000. Other associate properties equaled $1,380,000. Education fees paid equaled $1,380,000, and other losses totaled $1,141,000. The Bird Commission had awarded various Japanese Canadian claimants a total of $11,040,000 and the total losses minus the amount awarded by the Bird Commission still equaled a total loss of $443,139,000.

By June 20, 1985 Murta had written to Art Miki asking that Imai's Survivor's Group be invited to any further talks between the NAJC and the government, because Imai's position was more in line with that of the governments. (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Justice* 87) Soon, however, the NAJC was no longer forced to negotiate with Murta. In August 1985 Otto Jelinek, replaced Jack Murta as Minister of Multiculturalism, and he made it clear that he was unwilling to compensate Japanese Canadians with Canadian tax-payer dollars, because it was not the will of the majority. Much like the wartime politician Ian Mackenzie, Jelinek was assuming and invoking the will of the people without statistical evidence. While Jelinek claimed that the majority of Canadians were against compensation, an equally convincing argument could be made that Canadians were becoming generally sympathetic to the notions of redress. Media representation of the redress issue were generally sympathetic at this time, including "Exodus of the Japanese" (1970), *Enemy Alien* (1975) [see Chapter Two], and the aforementioned "A Call for Justice" (1982). R. Miki and C. Kobayashi also point out that at this time, "newspaper editorials across the country, as well as many ethnic organizations and civil rights advocates, were urging the Prime Minister to honour his pre-election commitment to compensate Japanese Canadians" (*Justice* 91). Also at this time, the Canadian Ethnocultural Council demanded that the government negotiate a just settlement with Japanese Canadians, and in "March 1986 an Environics poll revealed that 63 percent of Canadians favoured redress, and of those, 71 percent supported individual compensation" (94). Jelinek said that he would top up Murta's offer by a few million dollars, and the community could take it or leave it. Further strong-arm techniques deployed by Jelinek included his unilateral rejection of the NAJC as the official organization for Japanese Canadians. The NAJC was the democratically elected representative of and for Japanese Canadians on the issue of redress. The dominant discourse, frustrated by representations from the margins when those from the margins were not acting the part of model minority citizen, was attempting to threaten them into submission (the six million dollars being the equivalent of hush money) or to silence them by undermining their legitimacy.

As was the case when Murta refused to negotiate, Jelinek's strong-arm tactics further incited the grass-roots redress movement. In March 1986, the NAJC formally announced its redress position, after receiving the results of the Price Waterhouse Study and after having completed a survey of the community through a questionnaire. The NAJC formally submitted its position to the government on May 20, 1986. The proposal contained seven recommendations, some of them with sub-points, all of which are clearly out lined in R. Miki and C. Kobayashi's *Justice in Our Time*:

(1) official acknowledgement by the Parliament of Canada for "the injustices inflicted on Canadians of Japanese ancestry during and after World War II,"

(2) restored citizenship to those Japanese Canadians were deported under the Repatriation Policy,

(3) a pardon for those convicted under the War Measures Act,

(4) a monetary compensation of $25,000 for every "Japanese Canadian who was affected by the injustices during and after World War II,"

(5) a fifty million dollar award to establish community-controlled projects and activities,

(6) amendments to the War Measures Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to ensure that similar injustices are never enacted again, especially on the basis of ancestry,

(7) the foundation of a Japanese Canadian Human Rights Foundations, the specifics of which were outlined in a series of sub-points, to promote human rights. (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Justice* 97)

Throughout 1985 and 1986 public awareness about Japanese Canadian internment increased, as did public recognition of redress as a human rights issue. Meanwhile, Otto Jelinek's public reputation (read media representation) in respect to his recognition of human rights issues deteriorated. He was replaced as Minister of State for Multiculturalism by David Crombie, whose initial interactions with the NAJC, on October 4, 1986, bode well for an amicable working relationship. Crombie established an open dialogue with the NAJC and communicated directly with Japanese Canadians. However, by March 27, 1987 Crombie had offered the NAJC yet another deal, only marginally better than what Murta and Jelinek had proposed. By June 1, 1987, the NAJC rejected the deal, feeling dejected and demoralized after placing so much hope in Crombie.

Public support continued to increase for human rights issues and for individual compensation. This was demonstrated by the fact that fifteen ethnic organizations showed their solidarity with Japanese Canadians and supported their demands for compensation at the Multicultural Rally at Harbord Collegiate in Toronto on October

29, 1987. In addition, the American House of Representatives had passed the Civil Liberties Bill, which gave $20, 000 to individual Japanese Americans interned during the Second World War (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Justice* 108-9). This advance for Japanese Americans rallied the spirits of Japanese Canadians who were exhausted after four years of intensive battling for redress; some had even begun to retreat from the movement, back into their personal lives, and the hope that had been buoyed by Crombie's amenable attitude were now eradicated. The government seemed uninterested in the issue of redress, and at the NAJC's last interaction with Crombie he had told them that he would report to the Prime Minister that the issue of redress had been closed. Other than the fact that Art Miki and NAJC representatives had been asked to speak to the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism on December 15, 1987, there was little reason to believe that the government was at all interested in reconsidering redress (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Justice* 109).

Nevertheless, Canadians were encouraged by the accomplishments of Japanese Americans and they organized the Redress Forum for April 1988. This was another turning point in the redress movement. Just prior to this forum, Gerry Weiner became the Minister in charge of redress issues. On April 14, 1988 approximately five hundred Japanese Canadians from across the country marched on Parliament Hill to demand redress negotiations. Speakers from a variety of ethnic communities sympathetically addressed the issues surrounding *evacuation*, clearly identifying the events as human rights violations.

Gerry Weiner made his first statement on the redress issue at this event, and he disappointingly seemed to be justifying the actions of previous ministers, including

Prime Minister Trudeau, in regards to acknowledgment and redress. However, he appeared willing to discuss the issues with Japanese Canadians. The NAJC finally met with Gerry Weiner and his advisors, on June 15, 1988. It was clear from that meeting that the government's position on the issues had changed. They were even willing to discuss individual compensation. Then, on August 4, 1988, Ronald Regan accepted the American redress Bill HR442, and the spotlight in Canada turned to the reaction in the House of Commons. Brian Mulroney had, after all, criticized the Trudeau government for their lack of initiative in regards to redress, back in 1984, and in his pre-election campaign Mulroney had promised to compensate Japanese Canadians for the injustices committed against them in the 1940s. By August 8, 1988 Chief of Staff Dennison Moore had been in touch with NAJC president Art Miki to inform him that the government was desirous of a redress settlement. August 25, 1988 was designated as the date for a secret meeting at Montreal's Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Several days of serious negotiation ensued between the NAJC and a number of government officials, and finally on August 27, 1988 the NAJC and the government drafted the Redress Agreement that would be signed by the Prime Minister on September 22, 1988, in the House of Commons (R. Miki, *Redress* 303-326).

The details of the agreement in brief are as follows:[54] There was an official acknowledgement of the injustices and infringement of human rights suffered by

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[54] For an detailed outline of the basic agreement see Appendix A. For further details on the documentation outlining the implementation guidelines of the agreement see Arthur K. Miki's book *A Revitalized Community: Japanese Canadian Redress Legacy*: "Appendixes B&C: Contribution Agreement," "Appendix C: Project Evaluation Criteria," "Order Respecting Ex Gratia Payments to Persons of Japanese Ancestry," Japanese Canadian Redress Secretariat Report Implementation of Terms of Agreement," and more. Appendix A from Arthur K. Miki's book has been reproduced in full as Appendix A in this thesis.

Japanese Canadians between 1942 and April 1, 1949 (the day the last restrictions on movement were lifted), along with a pledge by the government to take measures to ensure that similar events never happen in future. There was also recognition of the contributions of Japanese Canadians to the development of the Canadian nation-state. Every Japanese Canadian impacted by the practices surrounding *evacuation* and still living at the time the agreement was signed on September 22, 1988 was entitled to $21,000. $12 million dollars was provided for the establishment of community programs to promote culture and human rights. Another $12 million dollars was allocated for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, which was finally created under the later Chrétien government. Also, it was agreed that the names of those convicted of violations (mostly for protesting family separation and internment) under the War Measures Act and the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act would have their names cleared. In addition, any persons (and their descendants) who was deported under the premise of *voluntary repatriation* was eligible for Canadian citizenship. Finally, and very importantly, there was a $3 million dollar fund established to facilitate the distribution of redress funds by the NAJC. The three million dollars was a key element of the redress settlement, because the Japanese American settlement had made no provisions for the distribution of funds, which caused a breakdown between the ideological accomplishments of redress and the ability for those affected to get tangible results. For this reason, the American redress funds were not distributed until the end of 1990, three years after the agreement had been reached (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Justice* 110). The Canadian redress settlement was more deftly negotiated and more efficiently managed thereafter by Chrétien's government.

What is so incredible is that while the American government had been more willing to negotiate individual compensation as well as group funds for Japanese Americans, and had long been open to acknowledging the wartime injustices, starting with the U.S. commissions 1983 recommendations, which were eventually ratified on September 17, 1987 as The Civil Liberties Act of 1987, Japanese Canadian redress activists had consistently run into dead-ends – take-it-or-leave-it deals that did not meet the demands of the community – and yet the representatives persisted. The indefatigable efforts of Japanese Canadians, Japanese Canadian community organizations, and, of course, the National Association of Japanese Canadians, in the face of obtuse Ministers of Multiculturalism, are commendable in terms of critical persistence. So many ministers were resistant to redress: there was Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's inappropriate classification of Japanese Canadians as extensions of the Japanese state rather than as Canadian citizens, and his resistance to the idea of redress; his Ministers of State for Multiculturalism Jim Fleming and David Collenette towed the party line; then, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney who had criticized Trudeau's handing of the Japanese Canadian redress issue promised compensation to Japanese Canadians (R. Miki, *Redress* 276-77), but his ministers were not interested in carrying out his pre-election promises: Jack Murta was obstinate, Otto Jelinek was equally resistant to negotiating a settlement that included acknowledgement and individual compensation in addition to group compensation; David Crombie seemed to offer hope but eventually only offered what the previous Progressive Conservative

Ministers had offered. Finally and dramatically, when the stuggle had been drawn out so long that Japanese Canadians had begun to lose hope and momentum, Multiculturalism Minster Gerry Weiner and Minister for the Secretary of State Lucien Bouchard, opened negotiations with the NAJC that included individual compensation along with most of what the NAJC had been fighting for years. Within a few short days, and after seventy-two hours of negotiations, a redress settlement was finally reached.

CHAPTER TWO

Mediatic Representation: 1945 – the mid-1970s

a. Japanese Canadian *evacuation*: the first films, the context

The Japanese Canadian experience narrated diachronically through literature and film necessarily includes large temporal gaps where nothing was produced, and at these historical junctures what is not said is as important as the periods when there has been substantial cultural production. An explanation for the context of those periods of relatively minimal literary or cinematic production has been made in the first chapter, which has focused on this history of Japanese Canadians and their dynamic relationship with the dominant discourse. The *pre-story* – the era between the arrival of the first Japanese immigrant to Canada in 1877 and the end of the war – literary cultural production of Japanese Canadians was, for the most part, limited to newspapers: the *Japanese Weekly* was established in 1897, and *New Canadian: Voice of the Nisei* was started in 1938 but temporarily silenced during the war when on April 16, 1942 Commissioner Mead made it clear that "any criticism of the government's policy could not be published in the only newspaper for Japanese Canadians (all others had been shut down)" (R. Miki, *Redress* 69).[55] As for the representation of Japanese Canadians by the dominant discourse, it was mostly inaccurate, mostly racist, and was expressed as popular opinion and at the level of political dialogue, both discourses perpetuated by the media.[56] The media representations from the dominant discourse via Vancouver newspapers – *The Vancouver Herald*, the *Vancouver Daily Press*, and the *Vancouver Sun* – carried stories of major events involving Japanese Canadians, but always from a biased perspective that discredited Japanese Canadians, generally characterizing them as instigators of trouble as opposed to people defending themselves. Japanese Canadian perspectives on the issues were rarely, if ever, addressed.[57]

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[55] Other publications, that straddle both the *pre-story* and *post-inter(n)ment* eras, which were published as the war came to an end in 1945, include the *Nisei Affairs* (1945-47) magazine founded by the Japanese Canadian Committee for Democracy (JCCD) in Toronto in order to speak more frankly than *The New Canadian* about government policies such as deportation and dispersal. Some pamphlets were also published by Japanese Canadians and Japanese Canadian organizations at the end of the war: ex. *From Citizens to Refugees –It's Happening Here!* (1945), and *Our Japanese Canadians – Citizens, Not Exiles* (1945).

The one major literary or cinematic cultural product of the *pre-story* era is the 1945 National Film Board of Canada propaganda film entitled -- *of Japanese Descent. Pre-story* and *post-inter(n)ment* are terms used to organize this thesis diachronically, but as artificially imposed time-periods they do not always allow for the easy categorization of events into one period or the other. For example, 1945, the year the war ended, straddles both the *pre-story* era and the *post-inter(n)ment* era. However, the propaganda film -- *of Japanese Descent* has been classified as a *pre-story* production because it was filmed and under production well before the end of the war, in anticipation of the necessity to manage the narrative of internment to the Canadian population after the stories of the Nazi death camps would become public knowledge. It is also a *pre-story*, because Japanese Canadians during the *pre-story* era were still considered Japanese in Canada, and this documentary very much narrates the position of the government and Prime Minister Mackenzie King that they were Japanese in Canada, and their integration into Canadian society was still to be determined.

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[56] For example, in 1907, when the *Kumeric* ship docked with 1177 Japanese passengers, rumours started that the Japanese ('little brown men') were going to take over 'white' B.C. "Even the Attorney General of BC joined in, falsely warning the legislature that as many as 50,000 Japanese were at the moment preparing to embark for Canada" (Japanese Canadian Centennial Project 30). Fabrications and fear-mongering resulted in the creation of the Asiatic Exclusion League, as well as the Powell Street Riot of 1907, to name just a few reactions.

[57] For more information, see Chapter 3 of R. Miki's book *Redress*.

It was, ironically, the post-war policy of dispersal east of the Rockies – a measure to force assimilation – that began a reformulation of Japanese Canadian identity, whereby "the nisei especially began to remake themselves as 'Japanese *Canadians*,' with the emphasis falling on their role in Canada as citizens" (R. Miki, *Redress* 106). However, the early years of Japanese Canadian identity formation through Canadianization, were predominantly focused on assimilation; as R. Miki puts it, the logic of those days was in line with Prime Minister Mackenzie King's notion that "Japanese Canadians could contribute to the reduction of racism in Canada by becoming invisible. Out of sight, so the cliché goes, out of mind" (R. Miki, *Redress* 106). Therefore, the period between 1945 and the mid-1970s is marked by silence, assimilation, and a relatively minimal literary, cinematic, or cultural production on the issue of Japanese Canadian internment through either the dominant discourse or Japanese Canadians themselves.

The cultural product by the dominant discourse on the subject of Japanese Canadian internment during this era was limited to a book written by Forrest E. LaViolette in 1948, *The Canadian Japanese and World War II:A Sociological and Psychological Account*, and sporadic radio programs and newspaper articles mentioning or featuring the issue of "internment"/*evacuation*. There were Japanese Canadians who had achieved or were achieving public recognition, but not necessarily in relationship to the narration of Japanese Canadian identity, history, and/or *evacuation*. Tak Tanabe (1926-), active in the 1950s and 1960s, is an abstract painter, who focused primarily on landscape painting. Roy Kiyooka (1926-1994) was a painter and poet; both he and Joy Kogawa (1935-) were published poets of some renown. Other writers at work were Muriel Kitagawa, Ken Adachi and Takeo Ujo Nakano. However, their work was not published in book form until much later. Muriel Kitagawa's letters were complied and published by R. Miki in 1985 as *This is my own: letters to Wes and other writings on Japanese Canadians, 1941-1948*; Ken Adachi's *The Enemy that Never Was: a History of Japanese Canadians* was not published and made publicly available until 1976 (when the Canada Council in association with the Multiculturalism Program of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada provided funding); and Takeo Ujo Nakano published a Japanese language autobiography about his internment in 1969, which was the culmination of three decades of personal poetry and diary writing: Sensei.[58]

What was available by the early 1970s were representations of Japanese Canadian internment by the dominant discourse. Pierre Berton, Wolf Koenig, Stanley Jackson, and Jeanette Lerman brought the Japanese Canadian internment to the mainstream through *The Pierre Berton Show* (published in book form by McClelland

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[58] His daughter, Leatrice Nakano, published an English version of the book in 1980 entitled *Within the barbed wire fence: a Japanese man's account of his internment.* In the preface she explains that the English version of the Japanese book entitled *Sensei,* is not a direct translation of the original:

> In 1969 his *Sensei* (roughly 'oath of citizenship') was published in Japanese in Japan, but intended for distribution mainly to Japanese Canadians. . . . By the mid-1970s Takeo had come to think that some of the content of Sensei might interest a non-Japanese Canadian audience. . . .With my father and mother I first made a translation orally, using as its basis the original translation by Kasey. As we worked along, we supplemented the account with details from my father's memory. I then confirmed through research the accuracy of the factual details underlying the account. Finally, I wrote linking material so as to produce a coherent narrative. At some point, my father and I decided that, since the focus of the work had changed, and since tanka suffers by translation, we would reduce the number of tanka substantially.
>
> Such were the stages in bringing the work to its present form. (vii-viii)

and Stewart in 1973 as *The Exodus of the Japanese*) and the 1975 NFB documentary *Enemy Alien*.

The dominant discourse to that time, had been narrating the Japanese Canadian internment in detrimental ways. Until the Second World War, the Japanese (who only later became known as Japanese Canadians in the post-war era of resettlement and assimilation across Canada east of the Rockies) had been historically represented as a threat to the Canadian population. They were continuously racialized, and their race was a threat to the future that the British Empire was creating. The prevailing rhetoric acceptable in the early twentieth century is exemplified by the following editorial that appeared in the *Daily Province* on September 9, 1907:

> We are all of the opinion that this province must be a white man's country … We do not wish to look forward to a day when our descendants will be dominated by Japanese, or Chinese, or any color but their own … We are an outpost of the Empire, and that outpost we have to hold against all comers. (rpt. in Adachi 63)

This attitude prevailed for the next thirty to forty years, and culminated in the *evacuation* of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. The displacement of 22,000 Japanese Canadians of all ages living within the hundred-mile zone of the West Coast was the result of racial prejudice. The Italian Canadian community and the German Canadian community were treated very differently. Several hundred men were from each community were rounded up, based on often unfounded RCMP black lists, and held without due process of law, sometimes for several years, before their cases were reviewed.[59] These other white-racialized (potentially invisible) ethno-cultural communities, however, were not systematically uprooted. At the end of the war, the "Japanese problem" had still not been resolved and the proposed solution was deportation, labelled repatriation.[60]

In 1944, anti-Japanese sentiment was still virulent and blatantly racist. For example, the differences between the Japanese situation and the situation with other European ethno-cultural groups were openly debated on CBC news. On May 25, 1944 on a *CBC Radio News Special* entitled *The World of Tomorrow*, the Provincial Normal School of Vancouver's instructor of psychology Dr. John M. Ewing gave, by his own definition, an un-biased and factual report on the "Japanese problem" in Canada, which he claimed could only be solved through repatriation of the "Japanese" to Japan. In his radio program he explains that the "Japanese problem" is different than the situation of European enemy aliens,[61] because the "Japanese" will not be able to be assimilated into the Canadian population, purely due to their visible race.

> Bodily configuration, facial features are strictly hereditary and cannot be changed as language and traditions can be changed. Apart from racial intermarriage they are quite beyond the scope of significant modification. Here then is the chief point at issue. What are the probabilities of racial assimilation through intermarriage? Granting

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[59] The Italian Canadian and German Canadian internments had their own unique situations, and were also an abuse of civil rights on the part of the wartime government. See Sheena Wilson. "It's Telling: *What Barbed Wire and Mandolins* does not say about Italian Canadian internment."
[60] Many Japanese Canadians of second and third generation had never been to Japan, and could therefore not technically be 'repatriated' to a place they had never been.
[61] Enemy Alien was a popular term used to define people identifiably from axis-power countries: Germany, Italy, and Japan.

> that no more Japanese people are admitted to Canada, what chance is there that those now here will marry our sons and daughters? Of one thing we may be sure: if racial assimilation does not occur, these people will remain a group apart. They will always tend to congregate together, and their traditions will continue to be Japanese. These are plain facts that no amount of eloquence, however noble and idealistic can alter. From the purely biological point of view any race on this earth can intermarry with any other, and such marriages can result in offspring. There is, that is to say, no biological reason why the Japanese in Canada cannot be assimilated. Assimilation would of course have an effect upon the Canadian people of the future. A faint oriental tinge would be common among our descendants. Under no circumstances could it be more than a faint tinge, because the Japanese constitute a very small fraction of the Canadian population. The biological side of the matter, however, is quite secondary to the social side. Here is the practical question. Admitting that intermarriage is biologically possible, what are the established attitudes of the Canadian people towards such an outcome? I ask you to be completely realistic and intellectually honest in examining this question.

His rhetoric would have been acceptable before the end of the Second World War, and it epitomizes the virulence of a racism so engrained that it is not even identified as such by those perpetuating its message.

Revealing his own biases, Dr. Ewing informs the Canadian population of 1944 that Japanese Canadians are ineligible for inter-marriage; furthermore, he argues that even if dispersal methods are implemented in order to eradicate the presence of Japanese language and culture in Canada, single family units still present a threat to the future of Canada, because language and traditions can be maintained within the home. He therefore proposes repatriation of those Japanese fundamentally loyal to Japan. He proposes that those who remain in Canada need to be restricted: they should be denied Canadian citizenship, ownership of private property, and rights of congregation/community until such time as racial assimilation operates in Canada. Of course, Ewing emphasizes that these are the conclusions "forced upon us by the facts" and he assures the CBC listeners that his talk is merely logical: "No prejudice and no passion has entered this talk." This CBC program, with its fascist rhetoric, took place, however, before news of the Nazi concentration camps was wide-spread. By the time the war ended a year later and the world had learned of Hitler's Final Solution, the attitudes towards Japanese Canadians and the *evacuation* of the community necessarily needed to be reframed by the dominant discourse.

b. -- *of Japanese Descent* (1945)

The narration of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* from the coast (internment and relocation, which later became resettlement east of the Rockies or *repatriation* to Japan) through narratives of the dominant discourse has always been about recuperating the events and re-narrating them according to the politics of the moment. After the Second World War and the exposure of the Nazi concentration camps, the

Canadian government's internment of Japanese Canadians needed to be reframed. Therefore, the NFB was employed to create a post-war propaganda film to re-narrate the Japanese Canadian displacement. *-- of Japanese Descent: An Interim Report* (1945) was directed by D. C. Burritt, and it narrates the internment as a public service: "a necessary relocation of Japanese Canadians to a healthier environment facilitating their improvement through assimilation" (Gittings 70).

The credits of the film frame the information in the documentary as an NFB production created for the Department of Labour. The title shots read as follows: The National Film Board Presents for the Department of Labour (next shot) " -- *of Japanese Descent* an Interim Report."[62] The music is at first an Asian track, followed by a marching band tune. This film is commonly listed under the title *Of Japanese Descent*. However, in the credits, the title is quite different. It includes a dash, and the entire title is encapsulated by quotation marks. What does the dash represent? Is there a missing word? If so, what word cannot be uttered in relationship to "-- *of Japanese Descent*"? Perhaps the missing word is "Enemies", or perhaps it is "Citizens"; perhaps the lack of a noun is simply meant to reinforce the ambiguity of their status, and in the vein of propaganda, reinforce the pre-conceived attitudes of the viewer. The purpose of propaganda is to *educate* the population. In other words, the purpose of this film was to justify government policies surrounding the *evacuation* to the general Canadian population, and to deny that Japanese Canadians had been interned: "It should be made clear that Japanese in these towns are not living in internment camps." The film emphasizes the fact that these relocation communities were not sites of incarceration, and the people in these camps should not be confused with those who were arrested. As R. Miki points out in *Redress*, the film rationalizes "the displacement of Japanese Canadians as a normal outcome of wartime conditions" (140), and more than acting as a didactic news piece, it also "assures viewers that their country does not have 'internment camps,' with all the negative connotations of brutality and confinement" (141). Taking that idea one step further, it was the end of the war, and not only was the government anxious to cover up their real motivations – to solve the long term "problem" of Japanese Canadians in B.C. – and deflect attention away from the fact that this was an abuse of the civil rights of the country's own citizens (something that Canadian soldiers were purportedly giving their lives for in the various theatres of war around the world), but it was also anxious to dissociate the camps in Canada from the concentration camps in German-annexed territories of Europe. Some reports of the existence of Nazi Death Camps reached Allied forces during the War. However, the claims were generally dismissed as exaggerated rumours. By April 7, 1944, two Auschwitz prisoners – Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler – had successfully escaped from Auschwitz-Birkenau, and went to Slovakia to warn the Jewish Council (Judenrat) of the Nazi plan to kill 800,000 Jews from Hungary. While there had previously been rumours of the death camps, the Vrba-Wetzler report was the first document accepted as credible:

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[62] These two shots are followed by the credits.

> Its authenticity broke the barrier of scepticism and apathy that had existed up to that point. It is doubtful, however, that its content reached more than a small number of prospective victims, though Vrba's and Wetzler's critical and alarming assessment was in the hands of Hungarian Jewish leaders as early as April 28 or at least no

> later than early May 1944. Between mid-May and early June 1944, about 437,000 Hungarian Jews boarded in good faith the "resettlement trains" that carried them to the Auschwitz death camps, where most were immediately gassed. . . . Elie Wiesel summarized it as follows: "We were taken just two weeks before D-Day, and we did not know that Auschwitz existed. . . . everyone knew expect the victims." (Linn 4)

By July 23, 1944, Soviet soldiers had entered Majdanek camp in Poland, and that summer, they also discovered Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka. By January 27, 1945, Soviet troops had liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, and when Germany surrendered, they had liberated Stutthof, Sachsenhausen, and Ravensbrueck. British forces liberated Neuengamme and Bergen-Belsen (April-May 1945). U.S. forces liberated Buchenwald on April 11, 1945, as well as Mittelbau, Flossenbuerg, Dachau, and Mauthausen. President Eisenhower had the liberation of the camps filmed, and the atrocities that had been committed there were becoming public knowledge. All of these factors combined would explain the Canadian government's foresight for the necessity to pacify the Canadian population about the conditions of the Japanese Canadian internment camps; the release of the propaganda film was timed to control public response to any discomfort at the similarity between Allied and Axis practices.

While the invocation of the Holocaust is too extreme a comparison now, given what we know about the condition of Nazi death camps versus those in Japanese Canadian internment camps, the wartime population would have been ill-informed about both events. R. Miki points out that the Canadian population new little about the events of the internment, even in 1945, the year of this film's release.

> Even by 1945, with the movement of Japanese Canadians closely controlled and monitored, Canadians knew little about the political machinations behind the internment. This shattering event did not receive critical attention from the mass media, only an endorsement of official positions. And of course the government acted to hide the knowledge that would have revealed the abuse of its own citizens. (*Redress* 140)

However, it is not unreasonable to think that the citizens of the Second-World-War era might easily confuse the two types of internment, considering the similarity between the rhetoric in Canada regarding the "Japanese problem," and the "Jewish problem." The goal was, after all, to create a white Canada, with "No Japs from the Rockies to the seas" (R. Miki, *Redress* 91), as Ian Mackenzie's election slogan declared. Even Escott Reid, a special assistant in the Department of External Affairs at the time of the 1942 Conference on Japanese Problems held in Ottawa (chaired by Ian Mackenzie), noticed a striking similarity between the rhetoric of the Canadian government and that of Nazi Germany. In fact, at the time of the internment Japanese Canadians were fearful of the unknown, recognizing that it was a time of war; according to a complaint filed with the associate deputy minister of labour, A. MacNamara, by Austin Taylor of the BCSC (British Columbia Security Commission), Japanese Canadians were fearful that family separation was a state mechanism to create conditions amenable to killing the women and children. The report reads:

> As you know, we have spent two or three weeks arranging places for the Japanese to be evacuated to and have had many difficulties, some of which you are acquainted with, in convincing the Japanese that we are not going to remove the men out of the area so that the women and children can be machine-gunned, etc., etc. (Taylor qtd. in R. Miki, *Redress* 93)

The fact that the Canadian government did not categorically kill any ethno-cultural group,[63] does not preclude the fact that these communities lived through these fears. In *Bittersweet Passage*, Maryka Omatsu reports the following historical words of Escott Reid: "They spoke of the Japanese Canadians in the way that the Nazis would have spoken about Jewish Germans. When they spoke, I felt in that committee room the physical presence of evil" (Reid qtd. in Omatsu 27). Sunahara also points out that during "the 1930's, while Nazi propagandists had been promoting the 'big lie' of a Jewish conspiracy to overthrow Germany, B.C.'s public figures had promoted the 'big lie' of a Japanese conspiracy to overthrow British Columbia" (Sunahara, *Politics* 30). Therefore, based on the politics of the era, and the changing attitude towards internment and incarceration after the revelations about what was going on in Europe, the government needed to "educate" the population about, at the very least, the conditions of the camps, if not the reasons behind them, since those were more flimsy and difficult to defend.

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[63] There were some men killed on an individual basis, when they were believed to be attempting escape.

The film -- *of Japanese Descent* does not focus on the rationalization behind the internment, but instead on the conditions of the camps and residual benefits the community derived from the experience. R. Miki point out, the film avoids the obvious: "Why are these citizens – not charged with any crimes against the state, yet uprooted and dispossessed – forced to remain outside of B.C. now that the war is over?" (*Redress* 140). Rather than address these issues, or any other relevant questions that might have arisen around the issue of internment and dispossession, this propaganda film uses the rhetorical tactic of juxtaposing several contradictory narrative streams, in order to inundate the viewer and evoke emotion, on the short-term, and apathy, in the long term. The film presents several narratives, most obviously the narrative of hygiene, and the colonial narrative of salvation through civilization.

The film -- *of Japanese Descent: An Interim Report* frames its narrative within the discourse of hygiene, where Japanese Canadian standards of living pre-wartime are unjustly illustrated using footage of what appears to be an *evacuated*[64] fishing village that has fallen into disrepair in the interim years, since Japanese Canadians had been relocated. In Gittings' section on -- *of Japanese Descent*, he says the following:

> The violence to the Japanese Canadian community enacted by this decision and registered in Joy Kogawa's novel *Obasan* (1983),

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[64] Miki points out the deceptive use of the term "evacuation," which implies a return after a certain period. That was, according to historical records, not the intention behind *evacuation* procedures: "For the government, constructing euphemisms was an effective mechanism to whitewash its actions. Euphemisms helped to translate the inherent racism of its policies for Japanese Canadians into the language of bureaucratic efficiency. This way of neutralizing the abuse of power generated a complex of terms that rendered 'normal' – in the eyes of the Canadian public – its brutal implications. . . . According to the Canadian government, Japanese Canadians who were forcibly uprooted, dispossessed and dispersed were being 'evacuated' for the 'security and defence of Canada'" (*Redress* 51).

> Michael Fukushima's animated film *Minoru Memory of Exile* (1993), Anne Wheeler's *The War Between Us* (1995) and Mieko Ouchi's *By this Parting* (1998) is repressed in *Of Japanese Descent* by Burritt's transition from what he represents as the unhealthy 'inhuman' conditions of Japanese Canadians before internment to the healthy 'human' conditions Japanese Canadians enjoy after their imprisonment. (71)

This propaganda film unjustly juxtaposes the abandoned fishing village with the occupied internment camps, where there are maintained flower gardens, as opposed to stagnant and polluted creeks. Invoking the classic ideals of physical rejuvenation in nature by escaping the decrepitude of city life (a classic motif that is best exemplified in Boccaccio's *Decameron*, where the group of seven women and three men leave Florence and go to the countryside location of Fiesole, in order to escape the bubonic plague), in this documentary, Japanese Canadians are leaving the fishing village life, in order to escape tuberculosis. The film explains how Japanese Canadians with tuberculosis are cared for and cured at a special sanatorium constructed for their benefit. The narrative even dares say that they are given a new opportunity at life.

This narrative portrays Japanese Canadians as Other; they are Other and lesser, and are shown to have been living in subhuman conditions until they were rescued by the *evacuation*. The narrative explains how the benevolent colonial government has relocated them in nature, in order to recreate a civilization that parallels that of the colonizer. Nature allows them to go through a process of decontamination, and it filters out disease: the evil of the hygienic discourse. Japanese Canadians are thereby *naturalized*; the play on words is intentional. Sent out into nature they become naturalized citizens of this country, because it is in nature that they are re-formed, re-civilized, and taught to be Canadian. There are shots of young boys in Scouts uniforms. The internment camps/towns become a moral map, where space is divided and assigned to various people: single men, families etc. Relocation becomes a pseudonym for re-naturalisation and re-civilization. Japanese Canadians are purified through their exposure to nature.

The camps also presented a capitalist prototype of civilization. Capitalism produces the same outcomes as internment. The many camps are represented a virtual reproductions of one another, all similar in their efficiency and organization. Capitalism produces small camps – model towns. The camp is also an ideal space (from the viewpoint of the dominant discourse) because it has re-*class*-ified its Japanese Canadian inhabitants. Doctors become lumberjacks. In addition, the camps have segregated Japanese Canadians from Canadian society. The film does not posit clear solutions to the "problem" of the "Japanese" that is only temporarily solved by internment. The implication is that internment is a solution, on a long-term basis. The ability to maintain a ghetto, as long as the Other is still able to participate in the capitalist endeavour, becomes the prototype for temporary (if not permanent) peaceful resolution. Then the fact that the camp (a reformulation of the ghetto) is located in the middle of the wilderness means that the Canadian citizen is naturalized through nature; the discourse about Canadian wilderness and the Canadian landscape so common to the pioneer narrative of Canadian literature written by the dominant discourse, therefore, is a loaded issue. Nature is ideological. Atwood also declared survival to be ideological and a defining trait of Canadian literature in *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*. However, this relationship of naturalization through the land, posits something new in terms of the Canadian identity. (This would also explain David Suzuki as a Canadian icon, despite his Japanese Canadian identity.) The atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki eviscerate the symbolic father of the nation – the Emperor – and nature becomes the second father: the fatherland is now Canada.

The opening word of the film is "War" and it is said with much deliberation and followed by a pause. The film then sets the Japanese Canadian subject up in a number of contradictory ways. Critic Gittings claims that shots of the women dancing at a traditional festival is the only visual representation of Japan, and that it is "neutralized, not only by the later shots of the Cubs, Scouts and athletes but by a cut from medium close-up of two women dancing, which in turn cuts to a long shot of the Rockies and then back to two consecutive close-shots of a Japanese paper lantern, one side emblazoned with the Union Jack, the other with the Rising Sun" (74). However, as I read it, the film consistently points out the assimilation and improvements that have taken place within the community because of the internment – blatant propaganda – but it balances those representations of the model minority citizen (or model minority) with allusion to their remaining Japaneseness: mention of the lumber and farming industries are countered by the mention that soybean sauce is another product being developed and shipped all over Canada. The narration points out that church services are held in two languages, and there was much fear about the maintenance of language and consequently culture. A foreign language could facilitate espionage, and espionage was one of the justifications for the internment. The narration points out that Japanese style bath houses are the rule, with plenty of fuel piled up to keep them going. This would have been problematic for the Canadian British civility[65] vision of the late 1940s population, who had maintained the British civility vision that constituted Canada's founding ideology. Gittings claims that the aforementioned shot sequence moving from the dancers, to the Rockies, to the lanterns suggest a "Canadianization of Japanese Canadians as British subjects" (74), which is exposed by the narrative conclusion of the film to be mere mimicry by the subject whose racialized Japanese body can never be Canadian because of the problem of its inscribed ethnicity/race. However, I do not interpret the clips that demonstrate the survival of Japanese culture within the Canadian landscape as neutralizing the subject or Canadianizing them. Instead, I see the amalgamation of Japanese and Canadian[66] culture as a way to present Japanese Canadians as a problem to the viewer. The Japanese presence in Canada is presented as a yet unresolved problem that will require "careful understanding" by Canadians: white English speaking people, who are intended to decipher the narrative framing of the film (-- *of Japanese Descent).*

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[65] Daniel Coleman in *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada* discusses the issue of white civility as part of the project of White Supremacy:

> the central organizing problematic of English Canadian whiteness is a specific form of civility modeled upon the gentlemanly code of Britishness. I call it an organizing problematic because Canadian civility is contradictory and ambivalent, never consistent with itself. Because this very problematic, troubled quality makes it dynamic, it is a project that is able to organize a diverse population around the standardizing ideals of whiteness, masculinity, and Britishness. (10)

[66] British imperial culture.

The narrative frame of the "Japanese problem" (-- *of Japanese Descent*), as I have said, begins with the word "War." The film goes on to insinuate that the road camps that the men worked on provided them with new roles to keep them busy. Of course, no mention is made of the fact that they already had jobs as fishermen, storekeepers, doctors etc. on the West Coast, before they were relocated. The post-war framing of Japanese Canadians as a model minority is in its infancy in this film. They are, however, a model group, not in spite of, but thanks to, the internment that has civilized them. The claim, reiterated throughout the film, is that the general health and standard of living has been improved by the internment, as is the notion that Japanese Canadians were constantly participating in community improvement projects: re-siding the buildings with new shakes, and growing vegetable and flower gardens, for example. Of course, there is no mention of the fact that the shacks were hardly weather-proof or suitable for human living in the winter months. The narrator states: "Home improvement work goes on constantly." Also emphasized is the fact that Japanese Canadians were able to lead a normal life, visit friends, and celebrate their most important holidays together.

> It should be made clear [says the narrator] that Japanese residents in these towns are not living in internment camps. Travel between towns in the same group is not restricted. These relocated people should not be confused with those who were dangerous or had subversive tendencies and who were arrested and interned by the Royal Canadian mounted police at the outbreak of the war with Japan. For Japanese, travel to points outside of the general relocation district is by permit. . .

> . Guards with bayonets and barbed wire fences have not been necessary.

Life in the internment camp is virtually equated with residing in a healing spa:

> Life isn't all work in the orchard . . . .As the village was built right on the shores of the Slocan Lake, a fine lake is available for swimming and sunning, with beneficial results to heath. Relocation has resulted in an improvement in the general health level. Before the evacuation from the coast, tuberculosis was known to exist among the Japanese and medical measures against it were carried on. However, the true extent of the wide spread ravages of the disease went unreported to the proper authorities, until the relocation. Then, so many cases were detected it was necessary to build this sanatorium to fight tuberculosis alone. In addition regular hospitals were built or expanded. Thus, quite a large number of the brightest young men and young women will have a chance for life that they would not otherwise have had.

The unsanitary living conditions of Japanese Canadians, something that Adachi points out might have been a reality at the turn of the century, was hardly the situation at the time of the internment.[67] Nevertheless, the idea of squalor and racial groups as a virulent presence in the Canadian landscape was a useful stereotype for recuperating their rehabilitation while in prison camps.

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[67] In *The Enemy That Never Was,* Adachi writes:

> Most of these accusations concerning low standards of living, the tendency towards insobriety and living in crowded and squalid quarters were valid. Shacks and rundown tenements were a very real condition of life, sufficient only for people who did not intend to stay. It was only when the Japanese settlement began to assume a more permanent nature, especially when wives were imported after 1907, that the situation began to change. Yet the charges persisted, firmly rooted after an early notion became a concrete conviction, whether groundless or not. (47)

The film portrays in a number of ways that life has carried on as normal for Japanese Canadians. The film claims that the children's education is progressing according to normal standards. No mention is made, of course, that their education was often organized by the church and/or the community, and in some cases the parents had to pay for it out of their savings and meagre earnings. Celebrations go on. Church is attended. They grow gardens and do home improvement, which is a symbol of having become civilized and (re)habilitated by the internment camp. Also, the people of Tashme are smiling for the camera: not necessarily a reflection of their content or dissatisfaction with life in the camps, but more the result of the fact that the cameras, as a medium, elicit smiles, even false ones.

And, where the narration of the film began with the word war, the ending frames the war (which really means the internment) as a temporary solution. Now that the solution of war is past, the call is for Canadians to *understand* the problem. The narrator holds up the people of the Tashme camp as representative of all the relocated Japanese Canadian populations, when he narrates the closing lines of the film:

> These are the people of Tashme, very much like all the others of Canada's 23000 people of Japanese racial origin. There are among them Japanese nationals, naturalized Canadians and Canadian born. Each of these three legal groups is further split and subdivided. Some in each group declared themselves at the start of the war as being loyal to Japan and wishing repatriation. Some in each group strive sincerely to be loyal Canadians. There are older men who had the opportunity

> to fight for Canada in the last war and did so. There are others who had that same opportunity who did not do so. Like people all over the world, there are the good, the bad, and the indifferent. The problem they represent has been solved only temporarily by the war. The ultimate solution will depend on the measure of careful understanding by all Canadians. (Burritt in *–Of Japanese Descent*)

The end of the film only reinforces the idea that Japanese Canadians are an unpredictable group. While it does narrate a heterogeneous community, it does so to fragment the community image, and underscores the paranoid notions resulting from wartime fear mongering that while some of Japanese Canadians might be nice as individuals, as a group they present a problem that requires solution. The narrative – and here I agree with Chris Gittings – asserts that Japanese Canadian assimilation is mimicry and as it is impossible for the racialized body to blend into the population, deportation is certainly hinted at as an option.

It is, therefore, understandable why, after the war, a large number of Japanese Canadians were determined to leave the shame of the internment behind them. In a 1945 CBC radio special broadcast *Victory in Japan*, Kinzie Tanaka explains that Japanese people in Canada must work to prove themselves as Canadians. He is gratified to know that no acts of sabotage were committed during the internment and he points out that the Japanese Canadians have cooperated fully in the resettlement program. Terrible sacrifices, he says, have finally delivered peace. The attitude expressed by Tanaka in 1945, who said that it would be the responsibility of Japanese Canadians to prove themselves as Canadian, was the prevailing attitude of Japanese

Canadians throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The issei[68] and in some cases the nisei,[69] were focused on creating a future for their children; many of the younger generation Canadian children were virtually ignorant of their Japanese heritage, customs, and language, by the choice of their issei and nisei parents who wanted their children to assimilate; the desperate hope was that the children would thereby avoid the dangers inherent in being Other. -- *of Japanese Descent* suggests that internment transformed Japanese Canadians by inculcating them into Canadian liberal democracy and capitalism. To a certain degree this represented the reality of the post-war reaction to internment: the desire to become model citizens.

Before the war, Japanese men had been paid less for their labour than their white counterparts, and in addition to unfair wages Japanese Canadians were hindered from raising their economic status with the institution of random legislation that limited their fishing licences and prohibited them from practicing certain professions. In short, Japanese Canadians could not integrate themselves into the larger Canadian communities, because they were Othered by white Canada. Ironically, however, their ghettoization was interpreted as a self-imposed exile, and was used against them. The marginalization process was such that they were forced by the pragmatics of survival to live in self-created ghettos. This was used as evidence against them, to prove that they were a potential threat to Canada, after December 7, 1941.

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[68] First generation Japanese Canadian

[69] Second generation Japanese Canadian

c. **"Exodus of the Japanese" (1970) and *Enemy Alien* (1975)**[70]

The 1970s, the decade I term *re-membering*, marks a significant moment in Japanese Canadian history, because high-profile Canadians, including Pierre Berton, Wolf Koenig, Stanley Jackson, and Jeanette Lerman, brought the Japanese Canadian internment to the attention of the general public through *The Pierre Berton Show: History We Lived Through* and the 1975 NFB documentary *Enemy Alien*. Despite valiant efforts to do justice to the history of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* these narrations, albeit sympathetic, impose their interpretations on Japanese Canadians. Berton and the NFB filmmakers belonged to the dominant discourse of their respective generation, and as such, their perspectives and motivations differed from those of Japanese Canadians, intersecting and diverging at various junctures. The aforementioned Canadian television[71] and National Film Board productions of the early seventies are a significant part of the Japanese Canadian process of re-membering[72] that leads to the period of *redress*. This chapter explores the political and narrative processes used to recuperate the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* on *The*

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[70] Please note that parts of this chapter build on an earlier article which appeared in *Language, Politics, Culture*. However, significant additions and corrections to that early research have been made.

[71] *The Pierre Berton Show: History We Lived Through* premiered in 1963 on the newly formed private network, CTV. The program was also known as the *Pierre Berton Hour*. It ran until 1973. (Fletcher and Everett) The show also aired on CHCH-TV (Canadian Hamilton Channel), a CBC affiliate from the time of its inception in 1954. The founder, Ken Soble, eventually decided that the stations strong CBC affiliation was unproductive and when CHCH broke ties with the CBC in 1961 the expectation was that CHCH would join the newly established CTV. Instead, in "October, 1961, CHCH disaffiliated from the [CBC] Network to become Canada's first, English-language, independent television station to transmit over 45,000 watts" ("Inside CH: CH History"). CTV was one of the first Canadian stations to broadcast talk television and this new station supported Canadian content/programming, such as *The Pierre Berton Show*.

[72] *Remembering* is the term that I have designated for the 1970s and early 1980s that flows into the period of *redress*, another term that I use to identify the period when the redress-movement gained momentum until the moment of victory in 1988. I have designated post-redress, as the period beginning immediately after September 22, 1988, when the redress agreement was signed in the House of Commons by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Pierre Berton Show and the NFB film *Enemy Alien*. The focus will be to illustrate how these shows are historically located within the chronological landscape of the 1970s, and that decade's political promotion of the Multicultural mosaic as the narrative paradigm for the Canadian nation.

Re-membering is a time of greater public awareness of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* and its injustices, as well as a rising interest on the part of Japanese Canadians to address their own history. The silence of the 1950s and 1960s had been broken by the efforts of a select few: those who were vocal and/or politically active within the community, such as Muriel Kitagawa[73], Ken Adachi and Takeo Ujo Nakano. However, their drive to tell their stories was not the norm. Forgetting, silence, shame, and a willingness to integrate in the larger Canadian community were the markers of the 1950s and 1960s. In *Broken Entries*, R. Miki illustrates the tragic result of that desire to integrate:

> I would like to say a few words in my weak Japanese. I had a friend help me compose this in Japanese. As a child I spoke only Japanese in the home to my issei grandparents. After they died there was so much pressure on us kids to become proficient in English, that I began to lose my ability to speak in Japanese. It was as if someone has simply entered my mind and erased everything clean. Many sansei, myself included, wanted so much to be integrated into white society that we lost what was closest to us, our mother tongue. During the redress

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[73] Muriel Kitagawa was an avid writer. She wrote letters to her brother which were compiled by R. Miki in a book entitled *This is my Own: Letter to Wes & Other Writings on Japanese Canadians, 1941-1948*. According to the editor's note, Muriel Kitagawa published a number of articles for the *New Canadian* and the *Nisei Affairs* (vii) Also, her letters to her brother were available to the public through the Public Archives of Canada, long before they were published in book form.

> movement, so many times I despaired that I couldn't explain myself in Japanese to the issei, that I had to speak through the barrier of translation. For this I am truly sorry. (22)

By the 1970s, the earlier desire to integrate and *forget* was transforming into the desire to know, to understand and to re-member. In the 1970s, the government allowed public access to archival government files pertaining to the Second World War and the Japanese Canadian *evacuation*. For the first time, the public was able to review the government's wartime action, and Sunahara exercised this right, out of which came her 1981 book *The Politics of Racism*.[74] Her study of historical government documents confirms that Japanese Canadians had not been a threat to Canadian national security during the Second World War. The release of the government documents that permitted Sunahara to conduct her study also coincided with a complex social and political dynamic that had been forming for several years. By the seventies, there was a whole generation of Japanese Canadians (sansei), who had been children of the internment, or who had been born slightly after the war. In many cases, these children were not informed about that period in their family, communal, or national history because it had been a taboo subject. Now, as young adults, they were beginning to ask questions. The Civil Rights Movement in the United States also encouraged Canadians to ask pertinent questions about Canada's history.

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[74] This book is an invaluable resource, because it records information for the public that was available only for a small window of time and has again become inaccessible. At the May 1987 "Spirit of Redress Conference," Sunahara explained that this is because those documents are now safeguarded "under the guise of 'protection of privacy'. I saw, for instance, RCMP reports on the men that were picked up immediately on December 8th and taken away. Those would not be available to me, because I would have to have the permission of those men, who are all probably dead, before I got into it. Consequently, if there are any secret documents remaining – and I very much doubt there are, at least remaining in existence, because the shredder was not known in those days as much as it is now – it would be very hard to get them if they mentioned any individual's name in them anywhere at all. The Japanese Canadian *have* the best documented history, by the way, because Alistair Mackenzie, Member of Parliament for Vancouver Centre, got married in 1945, then he died in 1949. His wife didn't really understand the nature of the man's politics, so she just put all of his papers in the archives. She never cleaned them out, so the evidence is all there. Nobody else is going to be so fortunate. I'm sure all the stuff from October 1970 has been shredded already. The odds of any other substantial abuse of human rights in this country being very well-documented is pretty minimal" (Sunahara, *Spirit* 33-4).

On October 8, 1971, Trudeau's Liberal Government announced its official Policy of Multiculturalism, and there was a new-found interest on the part of government institutions to promote certain model ethnic minority groups. Japanese Canadians were among these model minority groups, having become a highly educated and financially respectable sector of the population in the 1950s and 1960s; they were also a visible minority and therefore they could be referenced by the Liberal government as a viable model for the success of Multiculturalism. The desires of many Japanese Canadians to have their questions answered, to break the silence, to erase their shame, and to explore their position in the Canadian nation, was motivated, in part, by the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, and the successful resistance of Canadian bi-culturalism by ethnic minority groups, which resulted in Trudeau-era ethnicity-politics, which posited Multiculturalism as the answer to and erasure of racism. However, the polemical nature of the Multicultural Policy and Canadian Multiculturalism is that it racializing[75] ethnic minority groups. Trudeau's Multiculturalism program and his motivations behind the formation of a bilingual country with no declared culture is suspect, as he did not recognize Japanese

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[75] "Multiculturalism can be understood as an ideology panoply whose ultimate goal is to distribute the dominant or elite discourse. Indeed, it is an apparatus in which political, economic, social and cultural tensions are controlled through fragmentation, contradiction and the existence of bureaucracies. The virtual hegemony of multicultural ideologies, emphasized by increasing fragmentation and discrimination, contributes to the growth of a new socio-cultural group: the dominated ethno/racial elites" (Anselmi & Gouliamos 44).

Canadians as Canadian citizens, but rather, as extensions of the Japanese nation. He refused to acknowledge the injustice of the *evacuation*, since it was technically legal under the War Measures Act, an Act that he had used during the October Crisis of 1970, when the FLQ kidnapped James Richard Cross, the British Trade Commissioner and Pierre Laporte, the Minister of Labour and Vice-Premier of Quebec. It can be argued that even from its inception, the notion of Multiculturalism was a mechanism designed for the very purpose it now fulfills: maintenance of the status-quo of English-French Canada. Liberal and ethno-cultural philosophers, artists, authors, filmmakers, etc., may have been genuinely optimistic about the promises of Multiculturalism, but its purported undertakings and its practical functionings are not synchronous.

Renowned Canadian journalist, broadcast personality, and prolific writer, Pierre Berton, was worried about the state of Canadian national identity, and the lack of a national myth in the 1960s and 1970s; these were also the concerns of many of his colleagues at the CBC during those years (and his concerns would transfer to other Canadian stations such as CHCH-TV – Canadian Hamilton Channel – and the CTV when they picked up his programming). The zeitgeist for the post-Second World War dominant discourse was a desire to define Canadian culture/identity, in part to protect it against the influx of American media. This concern was largely the result of the rising popularity of television. In 1970, Pierre Juneau – as head of the

CRTC[76] – created regulations enforcing high levels of Canadian programming on both radio and television as a means to combat American cultural imperialism.[77]

In a television interview on the talk show *Take 30* with host Mary Lou Finlay, on October 6, 1975, Berton discusses the problem of having the Canadian national image created for Canadians by Americans who have historically portrayed Canadians on screen through a variety of barbaric and comedic distortions. Pierre Berton ardently advocated the necessity for a national mythology, and acknowledged the CBC's role in providing a Canadian image:[78]

> It [Hollywood] told the Americans something about their selves. Americans saw their own country through their own films. They knew they had cities, for instance, so that they knew they had the plains; they knew they had the Atlantic and Pacific coast. We didn't. We were never shown anything but the mountains, and the snow, and the forest. We were never shown a Canadian city. Not only that, but I think that America developed what every country has to have. It's got

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[76] Canadian Radio and Television Commission

[77] Those not in favour of such legislation attacked the definition of Canadian content (popularly known as CanCon), which they claimed was relatively ineffectual. Sixty percent of the broadcasting content was to be Canadian. However, there was a criticism of the fact that inadequate funding resulted in shoddy Canadian programming. Another criticism was that Cancon would only be suffered by those living outside the densely populated metropolises of Ontario and Quebec: areas where American channels were unavailable to viewers and where the CBC [and in some cases privately owned Canadian television stations] provided all television entertainment. There was a call for a change in policy and/or greater funding to foster not only quantity, but quality of Canadian broadcasting (Patrick Watson).

[78] Berton claims in this same interview that he sees Canada as having a strong identity; he feels, however, that Canada lacks an image. Responding to host Mary Lou Finlay's flippant remarks about the many ways that Hollywood has portrayed Canadians, Pierre Berton responds as follows: "I'm writing about the Canadian image, which has been distorted by Hollywood, and therefore we have no real image of ourselves. I've tried to set it right [in *Hollywood's Canada*]. I think we have a very strong identity. . . . To this very day we are fighting to retain any kind of national identity through television and radio, because of the enormous Niagara of material, words, and pictures that pours across the border." He credits the CBC as being virtually the only institution protecting the Canadian identity. It is also worth noting that at different moments in the interview he claims that Canada does and does not have a strong identity.

> to have a sense of community – that's a mythology: the mythology of the Old West, the mythology of the Civil War, the mythology of the Revolution, the mythological heroes who are real people larger than life. We were given none of these by other people's movies, and we had no movie industry of our own, or any mass media to do it, so that Canada until very recently has had no heroes. It has had no mythology. It has had no sense of the greatness of the past, the triumphs of the past, or indeed the tragedies and failures of the past, and this is what gives a country a sense of unity, and that is what we haven't had until television came along, and now – thanks largely to the CBC – we're beginning to get a feeling of that.

In his 1975 book *Hollywood's Canada*, Berton outlines in great detail what happens when the lack of a Canadian mythology leaves a void that allows America to narrate Canadian identity, not only to Americans and the rest of the world, but to Canadians. Of course, when acknowledging the CBC's role in creating a national image and identity, Berton's own role was central to that project within the CBC (and later to other Canadian networks), because of his eventual status as the unofficial popular historian of the country.

Pierre Berton had taken it upon himself to narrate Canada. Berton recognized the value of television as a purveyor of myth in performing what Roland Barthes had identified in "Myth Today" as myth's ability to allow us to take for granted our culture such that we no longer question its real political and social significance. Berton's project was to create myths of Canada that by definition would allow

Canadians to accept without critical political or social questions, the Multicultural liberal democratic context that had created that culture. As a journalist and broadcaster he was an ardent promoter of Canadian content and public television, and he acknowledged the valuable role of the CBC in providing a Canadian identity; he was a recognized presence on Canadian television and had an influence on programming content, in both the domains of private and public television productions. Even after his death in 2004, Berton remains one of Canada's best-known writers of non-fiction, with over fifty titles to his name. He is most revered for his popular histories, which effectively narrate a Canadian nation. *The Pierre Berton Show* premiered in 1963, and ran until 1973. When, on February 12, 1970, the CRTC made its controversial announcements about the new regulations being imposed to insure Canadian programming, Pierre Berton became an increasingly recognizable Canadian figure on Canadian television.[79]

Two weeks after the CRTC announcement about Canadian programming, on February 26, 1970, with the media spectacle of Juneau's announcements about increased regulations to ensure Canadian programming still in full-swing, Berton taped his half-hour episode, "Exodus of the Japanese." He interviewed Harry

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[79] Berton's television appearances and shows, to name a few, include the following: He was a panelist on *Court of Opinion*, and *Front Page Challenge*. He was the host of the interview show *Close-Up* and the talk show *The Pierre Berton Show: History we Lived Through* (also known as the *Pierre Berton Hour*), which ended in 1973. That series was followed by *My* Canada, which went on the air at Global, in 1974. That same year, *The National Dream* aired on CBC, and more than a decade later Berton had another CBC television series, *Heritage Theatre* (1986-7), which dramatized Canadian stories. He also hosted and wrote for *My Country* (1975), and *The Great Debate* (1975). One of his most remembered TV appearances was on the *Monday Report* on CBC, hosted by Rick Mercer; He appeared in the "Celebrity Tip" segment of the program on February 21, 2005, and gave advice on how to roll a joint, which is one indication of his popularity as both an intellectual and a recognized celebrity.

Nobuoka, Tsuguo Mineoka, George Tanaka and his mother, as well as MP Andrew Brewin. The way that Pierre Berton narrated Japanese Canadian *evacuation*, and all of his Canadian stories, reflected his political perspectives and his desire to narrate a specific Canadian identity: a unifying identity where Canada is imbued with a sense of "the greatness of the past, the triumphs of the past, or indeed the tragedies and failures of the past" (*Take 30*). He was an innovative thinker, and he espoused 1970s nation building rhetoric, which included a Multicultural vision of the country, *à la* Trudeau. Pierre Berton was and remains effectively the ideological historian to the masses, who in Canada are reasonably educated middle class citizens. It is Pierre Berton's version of Canada to which the masses of middle class Canadians subscribe.

The narration of "Exodus of the Japanese" reflects Berton's political leanings, his hopeful optimism for the idea of a Multicultural Canada, and his belief in the necessity for a national mythology. Using the medium of television he – as part of the dominant discourse – played an important role in breaking the public silence on the issues of *evacuation*. By 1970, when "Exodus of the Japanese" was filmed, little had been said about the Japanese Canadian *evacuation*, and while there had been some rumblings from non-Japanese Canadians and Japanese Canadians, there was little radio or television coverage of the issue during the 1950s and 1960s. CBC radio had focused some critical attention on the Japanese Canadian *evacuation*, questioning government motivations and whether there had been sufficient grounds to justify *evacuation,* and specifically internment. On February 24, 1960, for example, on *CBC Wednesday Night* Arthur McLennan, Harry Stevens and other unidentified guests (some of them Japanese Canadian) discussed certain events of the internment, focusing specifically on the government's ability to hold a man indefinitely under the War Measures Act without giving reason at any point and providing no apology for the unwarranted detainment. Likewise, when the episode "Exodus of the Japanese" (from the series *The Pierre Berton Show: History We Lived Through)* and its companion book[80] came out in 1970 and 1973 respectively, Berton's narrative gave the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* (with a focus on internment, road camps, and incarceration) a representation that attempted to take into account the perspective of Japanese Canadians. His version of internment reinforced the innocence of Japanese Canadians and condemned the actions of the wartime Canadian government. While Pierre Berton was sympathetic to the plight of the wartime Japanese Canadian community, his representation did both a service and a disservice to Japanese Canadians in the 1970s. Berton was able to identify and acknowledge this problem in relationship to the Canadian image when narrated by the more dominant American discourse in his book *Hollywood's Canada*, not five years later; when history becomes an image, all that remains is the spectacle of representations. Therefore, his narration of Japanese Canadian history functions within the same paradigm as the more powerful voice imposing identity on the less powerful community. In the aforementioned interview on *Take 30*, Pierre Berton said the following about Canadian identity narration:

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[80] The episode was transcribed by Janice Patton. The book *The Exodus of the Japanese* was published in response to popular demand. In the introduction, Pierre Berton writes: "The request for scripts and tapes were becoming more frequent and we were unable to fill them. I suggested to Janice Patton, then a member of my television staff, that she would be the ideal person to take the material and weave it into printed narrative. . . . The result is a new kind of media marriage and, I think, a very successful one. It underlines our growing awareness that Canada's history is as exciting as that of any country on the globe" (5). The print version of this episode is what continues to ensure its accessibility to a new generation of readers, as the original television episode is stored in the Film and Broadcasting Section of the Library and Archives Canada, and is not easily accessible.

> What's wrong (…), that is to say, we [Canada] had no mass media to counteract the false impression Hollywood gave, not just to the rest of the world, but to ourselves. If we are still searching for our own identity, as indeed we are – fifty odd panel shows of the CBC attest to that – it is, at least partially because, and I think largely because, we were given a false identity, which we couldn't accept, by a foreign medium, which was the most powerful medium invented by man.

In the case of Japanese Canadian history and identify formation, Berton was part of the dominant Canadian discourse imposing an identity on Japanese Canadians who were still searching for their own identity. Ironically, in relationship to the Japanese Canadian narration, he fulfills a similar role to the one he criticizes in the American media; in the 1970s Japanese Canadians had no media to *counteract the false impression* of them perpetrated in the Canadian mainstream media, which was dominated by Canadian content programming written and narrated by the dominant discourse.

Produced for television, "Exodus of the Japanese" mixed history with the dramatic and pulled at the heartstrings of the Canadian population, showing how Japanese Canadians had been subject to systemic racism. Ironically, however, by presenting the injustices of racism Berton was setting up a dynamic through which Japanese Canadians were being narrated into the Canadian nation as a racialized group, identified as a minority in the Multicultural landscape. Thus, they were not being incorporated into the founding fathers' pioneer narrative/myth of the nation's formation. In *Broken Entries*, R. Miki states:

> The "normally" benign rhetoric of "national identity" has worked to cover over the nation-building role of an exclusionary "identity" in the neo-colonial shadows of cultural sovereignty. The ethnocentricity of the quest to possess colonized space, operating through a masking of motive and power, has been disguised in the compulsive will to reify the authority of one's own nation as a sign of liberation. (130)

Pierre Berton took the internment and fitted it to meet his own political ends, which included both weaving an entertaining tale, and showing how Multicultural and open Canada had become by the 1970s. Berton's style manipulated the audience at the phatic level, using not only objective facts but personalized examples to arouse sympathy and guilt:

> The war with Japan brought the prejudice to the surface. On the day Pearl Harbor was attacked, a young Vancouver girl named Yoshiko Kurita was walking home when an old man came up and spat in her face. That afternoon, when Yoshiko's mother boarded a streetcar, a white passenger tore off her hat and stamped on it. (Patton 20-1)

Using a dramatic flare, Pierre Berton created public awareness and educated his audience about the Japanese Canadian internment (and to a lesser degree, some of the other events of *evacuation*). After the demonization of the community by the Canadian media in the years surrounding the Second World War, Berton's narration is seen as an absolution of guilt due to the ideological use of information. His narration becomes cathartic at the level of the image. Nevertheless, his message about *evacuation* was not entirely beneficial to the creation of open dialogue about the historical injustices perpetrated against Japanese Canadian, or the mistreatment of any minority group in Canada. Berton treated the injustices done against this minority group as an historical wrong-doing on the part of the wartime government. This medium allowed Canadians to participate in the communal confession and to subsequently repent and absolve themselves of their guilt. The attitude of "Exodus of the Japanese" reflected white-mainstream rhetoric, functioning to promote the official position of the Liberal government of the times, which promoted the Multicultural mosaic as the solution to discrimination and prejudice.

Berton addressed the issue of anti-Japanese sentiment in Canada, as manifest in the years surrounding the Second World War, and he criticized the historical role of the media in creating and perpetuating that racism. The wartime B.C. newspapers had given a forum to anti-Japanese propaganda, feeding the irrational fears of the population.

> It's [the B.C. press's] discussion of the Japanese problem centered on the question of whether Japanese Canadians should be allowed to continue fishing. Generally the press supported the demands of the United Federal Fishermen's Union that the Japanese be expelled from the fishing industry. Demands for the internment of all or part of the minority were confined almost exclusively to the often unsigned letters-to-the-editor. (Sunahara, *Politics* 30)

The anti-Japanese articles and editorials provided the politicians with written affirmation of that belief, and spurred on anti-Japanese government policy. Using the forum of Canadian television to criticize simultaneously the media and the Canadian government of the forties and fifties gave Berton's program credibility as a critical piece questioning the very form from within which it operated. The program also posited the 1970s government, their politics, the correlating social dynamics, and the contemporary media as being historically distant from the wartime government and society's biases and unjust actions.

When narrating the wartime government's policies regarding Japanese Canadians, Berton frames the issues to draw attention to the contrast between the historical government's position, and the political attitudes of the Trudeau government, and by extension Canadian television programming supportive of government policy. The following narration illustrates a political dynamic that racializes Japanese Canadians while invalidating the suffering of the German Canadians and the Italian Canadians: "The way the Japanese were treated was different from the way Germans and Italians in Canada were treated and the only possible reason was that their skin was a different colour. To be blunt, they were victims of racism" (Patton 14-6). The wartime racism to which Berton refers had gained momentum in the press and become policy because of Ian Mackenzie and other key British Columbian politicians who had long been adamantly against the presence of Japanese Canadians.

Berton's own media presentation perpetuates a new racialized social dynamic inherent in Multiculturalism. Pierre Berton's narration serves the Canadian state in its claim that discrimination and injustice are issues of colour. The result of this process is a racialized binary where those of colour make up the ethnic minorities and are excluded from the mainstream narration. These groups are thus privileged in that their past suffering is recognized, giving them temporary advantages in terms of government sponsorship for arts and culture. This serves the state in two ways. It creates a space in the narration of nation that recognizes the diversity of the country but in such a way that the space created is a marginalized one with truncated power in relationship to the limitless power accessible by the dominant/white population. This colour line also anticipates and pre-empts any claims by white communities – Italian Canadians and German Canadians in the case of the Second World War internment – to seek redress or recognition for the injustices they had suffered as ethnic minorities. Already in the early 1970s, the rhetoric was subtly instituting a hierarchy of suffering and discrimination based on colour. Indirectly, Multicultural policy implies the preservation of a colour line, while helping to minimalize the hierarchy within white cultural groups. Imagined white homogeneity not only fosters colour-based ethnicity, but disempowers white minority groups subject to discrimination. The impact of this new definition of ethnicity become very clear in the late 1980s when Italian Canadians were unable to achieve a monetary settlement comparable to the redress agreement awarded to Japanese Canadians; likewise, the German Canadians have never lodged any formal complaint against the government, silently integrating in a way Japanese Canadians never could, fundamentally because of the colour line maintained through Multicultural policy.

The wartime-media and government used fear to create patriotic fervour, and Berton's representation of Japanese Canadian *evacuation*/internment created complacency. "Exodus of the Japanese," while educating the population about the historical internment, minimizes the contemporary relevance of the issue, remaining vague about whether the impact of the internment was for better or for worse. Berton ends the programs by saying the following:

> Panic explains our actions, but it doesn't excuse them. We were supposed to be fighting a war to save democracy. The ugly core of Hitler's campaign was a vicious determination to destroy the whole Jewish race. Recognizing this as a monstrous insanity, we still allowed our racial prejudice to dictate national policy.
>
> For the Japanese in Canada, the exodus of 1942 changed the course of history for better, for worse, and forever.
>
> For all Canadians, it was a bitter reminder that we carry seeds of envy and contempt that grow swiftly whenever we are too frightened to be fair. (Patton 44)

Pierre Berton's segment brought the Japanese Canadian internment into the public arena as a topic for discussion and debate, retelling one version of the injustice that had taken place. However, his presentation was influenced by Liberal Canadian Multicultural politics of the 1970s and what he presented was a recuperated version of the internment by white Canada (English Canadian television), which was more sympathetic than any previous stances on the issue; it was not, however, a representation of the internment from the community's perspective.

What Japanese Canadians believed about their historical treatment was unclear, because they had never been, united as the homogeneous group they were seen to be by the larger white community. What was clear was that Berton viewed the internment as a closed chapter in Canadian history when, in fact, Japanese Canadians had not yet come to terms with it and were only beginning to address it. Berton was scripting a unified response, when he grouped all Japanese Canadians together in statements such as the following:

> Later, much later, many Japanese Canadians came to feel that the result of the evacuations were not wholly unfortunate. Cruel as it was at the time, the dispersal of the Japanese across thousands of miles forced them into the mainstream of Canadian life. (Patton 43)

Encouraging sympathy and guilt in his mainstream audience, Berton avoids controversy by muting any resentment on the part of Japanese Canadians and, instead, presents them as historical martyrs. The acceptance reflected in the above citation may have been the opinion of some Japanese Canadians, but it does not take into consideration the complexity of Japanese Canadians perspectives, which were the reality (and still are). The 1970s Japanese Canadian community was divided by politics, religion, ken[81]-ties and generational differences.

Despite the fact that Berton positioned himself as an ally of Japanese Canadians, and interviewed them when researching the show, his narration reveals his limitations: the restrictions of television entertainment and the boundaries of his own political perspective, which allowed for Multiculturalism to stand as the ultimate solution for past racism in Canada. The narration is Berton's own compilation. Berton sees himself as the official myth-maker of Canada and his myth becomes the way to understand the nation and the self as Canadian. His myths present what he selected to highlight, from the plethora of information that had been gathered, and in the absence of a unified vision of personal and communal experience (identity) on the part of Japanese Canadians, Berton drew his own conclusions. The result was that Berton created a limited vision of Japanese Canadians and Japanese Canadian history. Through his narration he imposed yet another version of Japanese Canadian identity on the community. Flawed as it inevitably was, Berton's representation was an important milestone marking the trajectory towards the redress campaign, which created greater public awareness about Japanese Canadian history, internment, and relocation, by Japanese Canadians. That process culminated with redress on September 22, 1988. However, before the process of awareness, education, and redress gained momentum, the National Film Board of Canada would narrate yet another version of the internment.

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[81] Japan is divided into many *ken*. Japanese Canadian immigrants often formed social ties with other immigrants from their *ken* in Japan. (*Ken* is usually translated as "prefecture," and a prefecture is a political sub-division of the country similar to Canadian provinces or U.S. states.)

The National Film Board of Canada released the documentary *Enemy Alien* in 1975, and this representation of the Japanese Canadian wartime experience was the product of a political and social perspective similar to that expressed in "Exodus of the Japanese." The filmmakers involved in the production of *Enemy Alien*, like Pierre Berton, were sympathetic to Japanese Canadians, and as members of the government institution of the NFB they were also promoters of Trudeau-era Multicultural politics. Wolf Koenig, the executive producer of *Enemy Alien*, was from a family who had fled Germany for Canada when he was only nine years old (Evans 69). He empathized with those persons displaced as a result of the prejudice and politics of the Second World War.

> A reticent person publicly, Koenig conveyed through example his beliefs that the Film Board was an ethical company where human

> relations took precedence and responsibilities to each other underscored the higher purpose of commitment to humanist (Old Testament) ideals. (sic) (Evans 69)

Koenig had the interest of Japanese Canadians at heart even if his intent was mediated by his own moral standards, which were not synonymous with those of Japanese Canadians. The film's strength is its masterful presentation of the contradictions inherent in the biased beliefs of the B.C. population, and its cryptic criticisms of the media and the politicians that propagated these biases until they were institutionalized as Canadian policy. If a non-critical viewer does not have an awareness of the socio-political and historical context of this film's production, this narrative is able to maintain and propagate the message of the 1970s government, because *Enemy Alien* is still readily available through the NFB, and through many public and educational/institutional libraries. The role of funding for films and the correlation between economics, politics, and distribution is a much needed study that falls outside the parameters of this thesis. However, this narration is yet another version of internment imposed on Japanese Canadians. The Western hero paradigm of *Enemy Alien*, combined with the aesthetics of the NFB's Unit B, more effectively narrates the politics of the contemporary 1970s Liberal government and the Multicultural Canadian nation than any positions on *evacuation* held by Japanese Canadians. *Enemy Alien* illustrates how Multiculturalism simultaneously narrates ethnic minorities both positively and negatively into a Canadian nation that includes them as the Other, necessary to define the term Canadian.

Enemy Alien reflects the dominant power-discourse. The film was produced by Wolf Koenig, directed by Jeanette Lerman, scripted by Stanley Jackson and Jeanette Lerman, and narrated by Stanley Jackson. David Suzuki, a third generation Japanese Canadian researcher (and consultant on *Enemy Alien*), is best known as the host of television show *The Nature of Things* that he has been hosting since 1979. Suzuki's advisory role on *Enemy Alien* would have been impacted by his life experiences as a child-internee during the Second World War. The first edition of his autobiography, *Metamorphosis: Stages in a Life*, was published in 1987; that version left off in 1986 when the author was fifty years old. In 2006, his autobiography was re-released as *David Suzuki: The Autobiography*. The most recent edition expands on the twenty interim years between the two publications. In the "Preface" of the original version, *Metamorphosis*, Suzuki identifies two reasons for his interest in science: his father and Pearl Harbour (5). The latter lead to the internment of Japanese Canadians. Ironically, the Canadian government sent the "Japanese" into the wilderness, and unlike "Italian" and "German" detainees, they were not confined by barbed wire fences. The mentality seemed to be that Japanese Canadians, were so foreign to the Canadian landscape that they would be fenced in by the wilderness, because escape into it would mean certain death for these aliens. However, the result is that David Suzuki, while living in the internment camps, developed the foundational knowledge that would lead him to become the Canadian face for nature exploration as the host of *The Nature of Things*. Furthermore, David Suzuki's attitude in 1975, as represented on the radio program "Judy," hosted by Judy LaMarsh on November 18, 1975, is that he is Canadian: "My commitment and my culture is

Canadian," and he criticizes the idea of a Canadian Multicultural mosaic, which he sees as impossible in the face of an overwhelming Anglophone culture. He does, however, remain diplomatic about the events of the war, and he expresses some resignation about the events of the that transpired. He says that "in order to keep your sanity and not be destroyed by it, you have to keep it in the background." Suzuki summarizes that when you are consumed by hate, then you lose. He also, however, hopes that his children begin to talk with their grandparents about their mythological roots. The use of the term mythology is interesting, and reiterates Pierre Berton's mentality about myth in relationship to identity, only this time the myth is that of an ethno-cultural group within Canada. *Enemy Alien*; this framing, reflective of a certain ideology popular in the 1950s, is used to portray Japanese Canadian internment and in so doing, inherently imposes a certain aesthetic and conveys a particular social and political perspective.

In his book *In the National Interest: A Chronicle of the National Film Board of Canada from 1949 to 1989*, Gary Evans identifies Stanley Jackson as "the conscience of Unit B, [who] used commentary to blunt those images he thought were aggressive invasions" (79). Jackson had been the mastermind behind the difficult art of creating effective voice-over scripts in the Unit B films, and he brought his expertise to *Enemy Alien*. His seamless voice-over technique, combined with the practice of suspended judgment oft used by the NFB,[82] was employed to narrate *Enemy Alien*, and thus Japanese Canadian identity. Suspended judgment is used predominantly in this film to juxtapose the divergent interpretations of events by the biased general public and Japanese Canadians. Directorial judgment is never directly stated in the narration of *Enemy Alien*, but it is implied through the voice-over narration that favours the historical plight of Japanese Canadians in its lexical choices and narrative subject, while enticing the viewer to consider the issues and formulate their own conclusions. The rhetoric of the following quote illustrates well how the logic of the wartime majority contradicted itself:

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[82] Daly, the head of Unit B, "believed that film should be something educational that served the public's needs. The challenge was twofold: first, to speak comprehensibly with images to which people related, and second, to understand that one's own relation to the whole preceded understanding the particular. From this philosophical approach derived the hallmark of Unit B's films – the leitmotif of suspended judgment" (69).

> The crying need was for manpower. Some tender hearts felt that it was not quite right for 12 year olds to work 10 hours a day, but no one questioned the shrewdness of employing Chinese and Japanese. True, they were protected by a minimum wage ruling. It was half that of their white fellow workers, . . . Japanese fishermen were being recruited by the big canneries along the west coast but early on the unions were protesting the cheap wages and long hours. These Orientals are undermining the work industry. They were unfair competition. Women worked all night when the boats came in, sometimes with their kids on their backs. Being made to feel unwelcome, except by their exploiters, they formed their own communities. This is Steveston. Here they could feel at home, and here they were blamed for forming a Japanese ghetto. (*Enemy Alien*)

The narrative uses irony, and plays with the delicate balance between the didactic and the esoteric to illustrate how the white community was simultaneously exploiting the "Japanese" while claiming that they were undermining industry. The white communities made certain that Japanese Canadians were ghettoized, and the ghetto, being a space designated only for aliens, thus, itself becomes alien; exclusion complete, and the ghetto established, the white B.C. population then claimed that Japanese Canadians were refusing to integrate. By juxtaposing versions of "truth," the film suspends judgment and allows the viewer to conclude for him or herself that the desire to keep the "Japanese" out came from within the white community and not vice versa. Jackson's narration also emphasizes the disparity between the reality of the internment and the public perceptions of internment promoted in the newspapers. Visually, archival photos of the shanty towns, some of them showing rows of tiny shacks that look more like four walled tents than houses, accompany the following voice-over.

> 21,000 were sent to camps in the interior. New Denver. Slocan City. Tashme. They were billeted two families to a shack. There was no privacy. It was uncomfortable. The first winter was unusually severe. Worse was the humiliation. The dream had been shattered. They were displaced persons in their own country. They worked when they could at odd jobs in nearby towns, but the newspapers complained that these people were being supported by public funds, living in the lap of luxury in the midst of a war of austerity. They should support themselves. They still had equity stored with the Custodian of Enemy Property. Sell it, they demanded. [Visually, the film presents stills of old newspaper clippings advertising the sales.] It was auctioned off for

> a fraction of its face value. It was used to pay rent and buy food, injecting new life into almost bankrupt mining towns.

Like in Berton's representation, there is the implicit criticism of the public fears and misconceptions that the media perpetuated through the editorial pages of the newspapers. The narration also highlights public fears about social class. Japanese Canadians were being forced into the lowest echelon of the working class. B.C.'s racist community feared the Japanese Canadian presence in B.C., as a threat to both national security and to their own economic security. The selling of Japanese Canadian private property ensured that Japanese Canadians did not present a threat to the position of white-Canada in the social hierarchy. *Enemy Alien* also questions the role the Christian churches played in maintaining the class hierarchy of British Columbia.

> Schooling was haphazard. Children were taught by older brothers and sisters. High schools were organized by Catholic or Anglican missionaries but students had to pay tuition to go. . . .It was hard on the young. They were Canadian, in fact if not in law, and Canada had rejected them. Who are we? Where do we belong?

During the internment, the churches provided an education to Japanese Canadians at a price. If they could not afford an education, they would be forced to remain in low paying jobs after the war. Either way, the Christian community profited. In the short term, the profits were the easily tabulated tuition costs. In the long term, the economic dominance of the white-majority was not threatened by an educated-racial-minority.

Despite what Japanese Canadians were forced to endure through their displacement and confinement, the documentary illustrates that the fears of the wartime-public were still not alleviated.

> British Columbians were getting nervous. What if the Japanese were entrenching themselves in the interior? The provincial government demanded that Ottawa do something. The department of labour produced an answer. It was in the form of an invitation to be deported. All persons of Japanese ancestry now living in Canada are invited to now volunteer to go back to Japan after the war, or sooner, where this can be arranged.

Japanese Canadians could not escape the fact that they were seen as a foreign entity, a virus, infecting the English Canadian body populace. The hygienic discourse about the purity of ethnicity and race attributed to Nazi Germany post-Second World War was not far from the reality of Canadian public sentiment during the war. This is made very clear in the 1945 propaganda film -- *of Japanese Descent* which was meant to present the Japanese Canadian internment within a more positive paradigm, but still focused on the unsanitary conditions of "Japanese" communities in Canada before the war, a situation that had been temporarily remedied by the internment: a trope that had been reiterated in relationship to the Oriental[83] communities since the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries. In retrospect it is easy to determine that contrary to public opinion, the virus was not the foreign entity of the "Japanese" population, but racism itself. In the introduction to *The Enemy That Never Was*, Timothy Findley eloquently summarizes the outcome of this infectious disease:

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[83] "Oriental" was the term used in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries.

> When he speaks of virulence, Adachi reminds us that racism is a parasitical disease. A sickness. A viral infection that spreads from person to person. It can even bring death – but never to the infected person. When he speaks of being one of an unpopular minority, he is telling us that beyond imprisonment there are devastating, lifelong consequences rising from the arrogance, the insensibility, and the politic benevolence of others. These attitudes, I fear, are far more prevalent in Canada than we Canadians have so far cared to admit and examine.

In the case of Japanese Canadians the virulence of wartime prejudice did not end with the war. Betrayed, Japanese Canadians were not safe from persecution even once Japan had surrendered. They were pressured to return to Japan. The Supreme Court ruled that deportation of Canadian-born Japanese Canadians who had committed no crimes was still legal under the War Measures Act.[84] Finally, in 1949, Japanese Canadians were granted the vote, but that could not undo what had been done. The internment and their treatment in the years thereafter did not inspire their trust in the Canadian government.

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[84] The process of declaring deportation legal is explained in *Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress*, by Roger Daniels and Sandra C. Taylor:

> Deportation of the aliens and naturalized Japanese Canadians was unanimously declared legal: however, they split five to two in favor of deporting the unwilling dependents of the male deportees. The judicial division greatly embarrassed the government. And with the fading influence of Ian Mackenzie and the rising protest of the Canadian public in support of the Japanese, cabinet members indicated that if a little of the pro-Japanese clamor had been raised earlier, they could have forced Mackenzie down.
>
> An immediate change of policy did not happen. Nearly a fifth of the Japanese Canadian population, almost 4,000 persons, did leave before King stopped the program in January 1947. (140-1)

Although *Enemy Alien* is an honest attempt to sympathetically portray Japanese Canadians, the film is working within the limitations of its Western narrative form (specifically, Canadian NFB national discourse politics), which reveal the pervasive Trudeau politics of the period. The golden years of Unit B had been between 1957-1963. This unit focused on animation, art films, and educational films. Its members were encouraged by the group leader, Tom Daly, "to experiment with candid portraits by seeking a naturally interesting character or group of characters, caught up in circumstances that involved the whole person in some kind of universally significant and fascinating situation (72). Daly's philosophy on documentary filmmaking is evident in the chosen subject and narrative organization of *Enemy Alien*. The naturally interesting characters, in this case, are Japanese Canadians and they are caught up in the universally significant and fascinating situation of oppression by the Canadian government. One of the agendas of *Enemy Alien*, like "Exodus of the Japanese" was to weave an entertaining tale. To do so, the documentary requires a hero, as that term is understood according to the Western literary tradition, who must face almost insurmountable challenges and overcome them. The frame story of the documentary provides just such a hero.

The frame story of *Enemy Alien* opens and closes with the visual of a lake in the mountains. Cutting to shots of presently abandoned shacks and focusing on a nameplate that says "N.Nakash," the narration addresses how old silver mining ghost towns were suddenly filled in 1942, because of the internment. Then we see the elderly Mrs. Horiouchi, our heroine, working in her flower garden, apparently oblivious to the presence of the camera. The voice-over says the following:

> In the summer of 1974 we crossed the country looking up people who once had lived here. The story that came out of their photograph albums and out of their memories was about how it is to be a small group trying to become part of Canadian society. In New Denver a few people chose to live out their lives in the place where they had been interned. Mrs. Horiouchi is now 80. Her journey to this place began on December 7th 1941, the day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour.

At this moment, the visual reverts to archival footage of fighter planes, bombed European cities and the war torn world of the 1940s. The chronological narration of the documentary continues from there. Then the documentary ends with footage of Mrs. Horiouchi chopping wood in her yard, which is meant to illustrate the strength and resilience of this old woman. The visual is accompanied with the following narration:

> It is over for Mrs. Horiouchi. She was too old to resettle in Toronto. She returned to New Denver where she could live cheaply and in peace in one of those shanties in the lovely valley. It is important that the long story of frustration and injustice, mistrust and hate, and eventual triumph should be remembered.

The film ends with another shot of a pristine blue lake in the Rocky Mountains on the other side of which is a rather large home which looks like Mrs. Horiouchi's home from the beginning of the film.

Mrs. Horiouchi's lifetime of struggles to establish roots, not for her own rewards, but in order to establish a home where her descendants can live, has resonances of Aeneas's similar trials and tribulations in Virgil's *The Aeneid. Enemy Alien* uses a Western myth-making hero paradigm to narrate a clash between the cultures of East and West. The imposition of the Western-hero-paradigm on the Japanese Canadian internment is reflective of the fact that the NFB was not narrating Japanese Canadian *evacuation* but was, in effect, using a government institution and a Western ideology to narrate the Canadian nation by recuperating the transgressions of its past and representing them in a form ready for mainstream consumption. This process of recuperation is a reflection of the social and political dynamics of the 1970s, which encouraged public, artistic representation of model minority groups in order to promote Multiculturalism as a social sensibility and not merely a political policy.

The frame story is problematic for other reasons, as well. It suggests that Mrs. Horiouchi has dealt with the internment, and that she has triumphed over her past. Silence, shame, forgetting and a desire to integrate and become invisible are misrepresented as her having come to terms with the historical mistreatment enacted by the Canadian government against her, her family, and her community. According to this narration, the Japanese Canadian internment is a closed chapter in Canadian history. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, as the Japanese Canadian redress movement began to take shape, it became apparent that this was not the case. Nevertheless, in the early 1970s the naïve belief that Canadian Multiculturalism eliminated the possibility for institutionalized discrimination somehow absolved

Canadian society and the Canadian government of their responsibility for past atrocities. Mrs. Horiouchi's continuous displacement in *Enemy Alien*, used as an example of that naïve position, undoes itself as it is based on a faulty assumption.

The narrative of *Enemy Alien* states that Mrs. Horiouchi chose to move back to the town where she was interned – New Denver - because there she could "live cheaply and in peace in one of those shanties in the lovely valley." She moved back to New Denver. Thus, it is clear that she did leave New Denver after the war. However, to be displaced twice – first from the coast and then again from the internment camps – and to return to the location of the second displacement does not signify that one has come to terms with the original displacement, which is what the narration of *Enemy Alien* implies. There is the implication that the internment must not have been very bad, or Mrs. Horiouchi would not have made it her home. Suggesting that the internment was spent in a lovely valley, to which anyone would want to retire, minimizes the horror of being displaced, interned indefinitely with no outside contact, and being treated like a prisoner who was made to pay their own way.[85] To return freely, and to be interned are potentially one and the same thing. She is the prisoner of her own history, and she lives out her life in the place of trauma.

This documentary also holds up Mrs. Horiouchi – who never speaks for herself and on whom an identity is imposed by the narrator – as the representative for the entire Japanese Canadian population. When the film implies that she has forgiven and moved on, it insinuates that the rest of the community has done the same.

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[85] This is a reference to the fact that the Custodian of Enemy Property sold all Japanese property at a fraction of what it was worth in order to provide cash flow to the internees, such that they could support themselves and alleviate the financial burden internment was creating for the state.

Subsequent first-person narrations of the internment reveal that this was far from the reality of the 1970s. The community was scarred by what had happened to their families and their communities, and ashamed of the treason that was implied by having been interned. In the context of Canadian society, Japanese Canadians were guilty until proven innocent. The narrative of *Enemy Alien* imposes the idea of achieved closure onto Japanese Canadians; however, in 1975, when the film narrated the events of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* as an historical transgression that Japanese Canadians and Canadians had already resolved, certain serious realities were being glossed over. Most important was the fact that the War Measures Act was the same as it had been during the Second World War[86]; this meant that there was the danger of history repeating itself. In fact, the War Measures Act had been invoked during the FLQ crisis in Quebec in 1970. There is an embedded politic at work in the film, as much through what is said, as through what is not said. As a government institution, it was not the goal of the NFB to warn or excite the public about the transparency of their constitutional rights, just as it was not a part of the filmmakers' agenda to inspire the uprising of minority groups against the Canadian government for marginalizing them through the policy of Multiculturalism that claimed to include them within the Canadian mosaic.

The message of the film speaks very powerfully to the public's desire to abdicate their responsibility for the perpetuation of discrimination, past, present and future, because the Canadian population of the Trudeau era wanted to believe in the success of the 1971 Canadian Multiculturalism Policy. *Enemy Alien* warns that as Canadians we should be cognizant of our racist practices, but it suggests that these concerns are largely a part of our history, and not our present or our future. This was not entirely the situation, and even Barry Broadfoot's oral history *Years of Sorrow, Years of Shame: The Story of the Japanese Canadians in World War II*[87] that would come out two years later, identifies the residual racism that makes the issues of the Second World War relevant to his contemporary 1977 readers. He says that the story of Japanese Canadians "should be told – not only for historical reasons but also for the lessons it teaches us about the kind of people we Canadians were, and perhaps still are" (vi). The film indicates that Japanese Canadians had attained the vote, making them legally Canadian, and the vote is the provided proof of equality. The concluding lines of the narration (just before the frame story of Mrs. Horiouchi) reinforce that idea: "and at last, in 1949, they got the right to vote. **Can Japanese be Canadians?** [an archival newspaper headline shown on the screen] Their question had been answered." The implicit answer to the archival headline is ""Yes". The complexities of living as a minority group, racialized by the very process of Multiculturalism touted as the means of emancipation, are completely ignored.

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[86] At the Spirit of Redress Conference in 1987, Sunahara expressed her concern that our Charter looks great in peacetime, "but in time of emergency may not provide protection. It may prevent some of the things that happened to Japanese Canadians, particularly it would prevent the deportation of the Japanese Canadians, … [but] there's nothing to stop them from taking property again; there's nothing to stop them moving people out of an entire province"; and there's nothing to say that they could not infringe upon individual rights by claiming a state of emergency. She claims that the internment of the Japanese Canadians "is a precedent, it is a very dangerous precedent" (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi 28).

Pierre Berton, the CBC and other Canadian television broadcasting corporations, along with Koenig, Lerman, and Jackson at the NFB, visually present the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* (with a focus on internment) and give a voice to the injustices suffered by Japanese Canadians; it is their work, in part, that helped pave the way for Japanese Canadians to publicly address and narrate their own history. However, one must remain cognizant of the role that these narrations play within the larger historical narrative of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation*, and despite their credibility as NFB or Canadian television productions they should not be given authority beyond their representation of the internment during a specific historical moment.[88] They are marked with the politics of their creators and of their time. They were Multicultural propaganda that hastily claimed everything was resolved when, in fact, it has not yet been addressed. For Japanese Canadians in the 1970s the issue of internment had never really been dealt with and the community clearly did not have the closure suggested by "Exodus of the Japanese" or *Enemy Alien.* Both of these productions present the internment as another historical atrocity of the Second World War, without recognizing the lasting impact that it was having on the present. This message is highly political, as Canadian television and film are funded, to varying degrees, by the Canadian government, whose employees were working within the context of a Liberal government keen to promote Multiculturalism and equally concerned with avoiding redress action from historically marginalized and persecuted communities. Maryka Omatsu in her book *Bittersweet Passage* identifies the government's mechanisms of control, calling government officials long-time experts in ethnic control: "Catching the NAJC off guard, the Liberals summarily would have signed a deal with the shikataga-nai[89] faction. In the process our community would have lost its last chance at rebirth. The psychic lesions of the internment survivors would have continued to fester under the skin, and the rights of all Canadian minorities would have remained at risk" (128-9). The process of redress was also a process of identity discovery and formation necessary to the healing process.

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[87] This book, published the year that the Japanese Canadians celebrated their centennial in this country, was another timely narrative from the dominant discourse that sympathized with Japanese Canadians, and participated in the dialogue on internment, that was starting to gain momentum.

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[88] It is important to contextualize these resources, because they are still being used in 2005 to frame the Japanese Canadian internment. For example, the virtual library, Japanese Canadian Internment *Information at the University of Washington Libraries and Beyond,* introduces the page "Internment and Redress" using a quote from *The Exodus of the Japanese.* (http://www.lib.washington.edu/subject/Canada/internment/intro.html)

The identity imposed on Japanese Canadians by the media of the pre-war years, the wartime, and the post-war era was detrimental; while the narrations of *Enemy Alien* and "Exodus of the Japanese" were the most positive press to date, Japanese Canadians would see the need to take control of their own community narration and identity in the late 1970s. 1977 would mark a significant turning point within for Japanese Canadians.

> The idea of redress was . . . occasioned in 1977 by the community's celebration of our first hundred years in this country. In our remembrance, the sweet memories were darkened by long shadows. The speeches were laced with coded references to pain and anger. For the first time curious sansei demanded an explanation. The sansei, holding the issei's soft hands or looking deep into the nisei's avoiding eyes, could sense that lying just below the surface was a bitter truth. A

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[89] "Shikataga-nai"_translates as something akin to "resignation." Omatsu uses the term to refer to George Imai and his followers who were predominantly from the older generations. Imai is a nisei and past-president of the NJCCA who had made it a habit to speak for the community without consultation. In the early 80s, he had been in secret negotiations with the Liberal government for a redress settlement that included acknowledgement and a mere $5 million fund, which was not exclusively for Japanese Canadians. When the larger community discovered this, they were forced to get organized before the Liberal government simply erased one historically autocratic move – the internment - with another, by handing them a small lump sum and an acknowledgement of injustice without conferring with the community about what they deemed an acceptable settlement.

> committee to consider appropriate forms of redress was formed.
>
> (Omatsu 96)

At this historical juncture, Japanese Canadians would begin to discover what their history was and decide for themselves how it should be narrated. They would also have to decide as a community how they would address the past injustices and their contemporary dilemmas. One of the challenges would be to present a united front to the government in order to win the redress movement. Another would be to rediscover, redefine and rewrite themselves in a Multicultural country that 'included' them as ethnic, marginalized citizens. These struggles would be part of the *redress* stage of their battle for emancipation. That process would allow Japanese Canadians to reclaim their history and eventually manage their identity in the *post-redress* period.

CHAPTER THREE

Redress Era

a) Contextualizing *Redress*

The period that I have termed the *redress era* began in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The idea of a redress movement had gained momentum over the decade of *re-membering*, the 1970s. The civil rights movement in the United States had created awareness about race issues and human rights in Canada. Japanese Americans had begun organizing a redress campaign, which inspired Japanese Canadians to do much the same, and when redress seemed at times impossible, the advances made by Japanese American redress activists, and the successful settlement negotiated by them, provided a beacon of hope for Japanese Canadian activists. As discussed in Chapter Two, the 1970s had given some media (CBC and NFB) attention to the Japanese Canadian wartime situation, and by the late 1970s there were two historical publications available: Barry Broadfoot's history entitled *Years of Sorrow Years of Shame*, and the 1978 publication of the Japanese Canadian Centennial Project's *A Dream of Riches*. The first had widespread circulation as a result of the major publishing house, Doubleday; the second was a history of Japanese Canadians published by the community. Both the mainstream and Japanese Canadians were taking on the project of writing a Japanese Canadian history.

The late 1970s brought with it a heightened awareness about redress. By 1976 the National Redress Committee in Toronto had begun to officially discuss the idea of redress. By 1977 the Reparations Committee was formed and in the subsequent years there were questionnaires distributed to the community, articles published in the *New Canadian* and the *Canada Times,* and documentation produced about Japanese Canadian views on their wartime experiences. The National Association of Japanese Canadians met in 1979, and heard the Reparation Committee's position paper on redress (R. Miki, *Redress* 172). Political positions on redress were being formed and negotiated, and during those same years Second World War government documents became available to the public. Both Sunahara's *Politics*[90] and Kogawa's *Obasan* were published in 1981. While these books are different in genre, historical and fictional respectively, they both rely on historical facts and government documents to narrate the history of the Japanese Canadian Second-World-War *evacuation* from the West Coast. The publication of these two books, particularly *Obasan*, which was the first literary text written by a Japanese Canadian on the wartime experience of the community, signals the beginning of a new era in which Japanese Canadians would begin to take control of the narration of Japanese Canadian identities through artistic and literary expressions and political action via the redress movement.

During the 1980s redress became a formal movement (see Chapter One). By 1984 the redress movement had acquired its own self-sustaining dynamic. There had been significant popular news coverage of the Japanese Canadian desire for redress, especially after 1982, when the US Congress established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, and CBC TV had produced the documentary entitle "A Call for Justice" as part of *The Journal*. Midi Onodera's film *The Displaced View* was released in 1988 and artistically records the filmmaker's story about her struggle to uncover her family and communal history with all its secrets and generational differences that include a linguistic and cultural divide that prove, at times, to be insurmountable. Ultimately Midi Onodera's personal documentary acts as another community autobiography,[91] in the same way as does *Obasan*, because the experience of becoming aware of the community past, and the motivations of the older generations are suddenly explicable (although not always forgivable) from this new perspective. By 1988 redress had entered into the popular Canadian vocabulary, and the monumental victory of the Japanese Canadian redress committee on September 22nd, 1988 marks a clear end to the *redress era* of Canadian history, moving the community into the *post-redress era*. The *redress era* is clearly book-ended by the literary work *Obasan* and cinematic work *The Displaced View*. They both function as polyphonic community autobiographies, and what they record is the unveiling of wartime events to a younger generation through a dialogue with history and with older family members. Both texts also expose the reality that some of what was silenced and forgotten has been permanently erased from the cultural community memory and can never be recovered, and must therefore be imagined and re-integrated into the imagination of identity:, personal, familial, and communal.

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[90] Sunahara's book has been a valuable historical resource. However, it is not part of the literary and cinematic cultural product being analyzed within the parameters of this thesis.

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[91] Community autobiography is a concise term used to capture the theoretical framework E.D. Blodgett outlines in his article "Ethnic Writing in Canada: Borders and Kogawa's *Obasan*," in which he writes the following:

> Cultural space, then, is plural, just as is the question of origin, implying that the composition of the subject is also plural. In other words, one should ask with reference to the subject, *what*, rather than *who*, speaks. For the narrated is not simply a character, but a plurality of registers constructing an ethnic voice. This holds especially for those narratives, whether in prose or poetry, that adopt an autobiographical form, in which the speaker's position is immediately doubled in its focalization. Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, for example, presents in its opening pages various speakers, each of whom speaks from different registers or possibly from different ontological positions. (E.D. Blodgett 62-3)

b) Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (1981)

Joy Kogawa's biography is significant because within the sphere of public reception of the novel and perception of the author, she has become synonymous with the narrator (Naomi) of her first and most well-recognized novel *Obasan*. Naomi also reappears in Kogawa's second novel *Itsuka* and her children's book *Naomi's Road*. Kogawa's *Obasan* has become a community autobiography for which Naomi Nakane's family history has become representative (to the community's detriment) of the Japanese Canadian wartime experience, because by proxy Naomi Nakane is imbued with the authority of Joy Kogawa's own persona, voice, and personal history as a Japanese Canadian who lived through internment. The biographies of the author and the character bear a certain resemblance: "Megumi Naomi Nakane. Born June 18, 1936, Vancouver, British Columbia" (7). The author was born on June 6th, 1935, in Vancouver British Columbia. While Naomi is a sansei, Kogawa is a nisei whose experience differed significantly from Naomi's. Naomi's experience is a researched experience meant to represent something similar to what the author lived through, but the novel also offers a complex and multiple-layered narrative rife with symbolism and metaphor drawn from the multiplicity of wartime scenarios endured by Japanese Canadians, as well as the rich resources of the author's own imagination, as opposed to her personal story. Kogawa's father was an Anglican minister. During the war her family was relocated to Slocan (one of the many internment camps in the B.C. interior) and after the war they relocated to Coaldale, Alberta. Nevertheless, this conflation of identities is inherently detrimental, and one of the negative repercussions of Kogawa's success. In *Broken Entries*, R. Miki points out that non-Japanese readers, many of them academics, have essentialized Kogawa's identity:

> [They] have essentialized "Joy Kogawa," as a typical Japanese Canadian who experienced internment and whose representation (in both senses) of Japanese Canadians must be authentic. Such transparent "realism," however, imposes homogeneity on the racialized subject and denies knowledge of the perceptual limits of "Kogawa the writer" whose imagination participates in the invention of a "Japanese Canadian" subject positioning. It ignores the multifaceted, indeterminate, and even duplicitous zones in texts that are constrained by racialized systems of power. (137)

Kogawa, nevertheless, acknowledges the falsity of homogenizing metanarratives, and the body of her work itself is much more complex and heterogeneous than the excessive academic focus on *Obasan* concedes.

Kogawa has been an active writer or prose and poetry. Her numerous poetry books include *The Splintered Moon* (1967), *A Choice of Dreams* (1974), *Jericho Road* (1977), *Woman of the Woods* (1985), *A Song of Lilith* (2000), and *A garden of anchors: selected poems* (2003); she has also published a number of individual poems.[92] Her poetry explores a wide range of issues including displacement in both ancestral home and nation of birth, racism, abuse, sympathy for human failings and suffering, the power of women, weaving history, fiction, and non-fiction/autobiography into her poetic world. While Kogawa is a renowned poet and was publishing as a poet before she was recognized for her prose, her poetic acclaim comes somewhat from her reputation as a novelist and her poetry is highly understudied. However, Kogawa's novel *Obasan* has become the most well-known Japanese Canadian narration of *evacuation*, and in some cases of ethno-cultural writing in Canada.

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[92] Some poems were published individually in *Canadian Literature* between 1983 and 1994: "Pink geranium" (1983), "Road building by pick axe" (1983). "Grief poem" (1984), "In the forest" (1984), and "For A.D." (1994),

Kogawa also has three novels, a children's book, and several articles. Her first novel *Obasan* is by far the most celebrated, and has overshadowed all the writing she did before it came out in 1981, and everything that she has written since its publication. Her children's book *Naomi's Road* (1986) is based on the novel *Obasan*, and both *Obasan* and *Naomi's Road* have been translated into Japanese,[93] and the children's book has inspired the play *Naomi's Road* (2000) staged by Edmonton's Concrete Theatre and directed by Mieko Ouchi,[94] as well as the Vancouver Opera's production of *Naomi's Road: an opera for young people* (2005: *post-redress era*). During the redress campaign the novel *Obasan* become one avenue for creating public awareness, and as the first Japanese Canadian representation of wartime experience, acts as a community autobiography. This novel inspired the sequel *Itsuka*,[95] printed in 1992 (making it part of *post-redress era* publications. *Itsuka* was successful enough for two reprintings, in 1993 and in October 2005 with a new title:

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[93] The Japanese titles respectively are *Ushinawareta sokuku* (1983), and *Naomi no Michi* (1988).

[94] Mieko Ouchi is an Edmonton based Japanese Canadian actress, writer, and director who works in both film and theatre. She is highly involved in the Edmonton and Canadian arts scenes. She has created two film on Japanese Canadian *evacuation* and identity: *By this Parting*, which is an experimental short film, and *Shepherd's Pie and Sushi*, which is the story of her family and her discovery of her Japanese Canadian roots that started when she starred as Aya Kawashima in *The War Between Us*. Another of her films that has screened at Asian film festivals is *Samurai Swing* which does not explicitly explore issues of identity, but in telling the story of a Japanese Canadian young man living in small-town Alberta who wants to be a Swing singer, issues of Japanese Canadian identity and the history of *evacuation* are subtly referenced as part of the context of the film.

[95] *Itsuka*, roughly translated, means "someday."

Emily Kato. The new title is also the name of the protagonist, Aunt Emily, a redress activist. The novel itself deals with the historical period of redress, and while it has been popular enough to receive three reprintings,[96] it is significant that the original title, a Japanese word, has been supplanted by the name of the protagonist: a name that is not very foreign, not hard to pronounce, and perhaps less exclusive of monolingual anglophiles. *Itsuka* received much less critical praise than *Obasan*. There are many possible reasons why the novel did not enjoy the same critical success as *Obasan*, including the fact that the narrative style is much less poetic and much more direct, almost aggressive, when considered in combination with the political content, the redress campaign. Also, the novelty of Japanese Canadian issues had worn-off after the redress settlement. The socio-political dynamic of writing about the *redress era* – an era when Japanese Canadians challenged the status quo and therefore stood on the margins as Other – in a *post-redress era* was out of time, due to the fact that Japanese Canadians were being recuperated by mainstream[97] narratives as the model minority citizen, the victim-survivor who overcomes all odds. Heather Zwicker's summary deftly identifies one of the novel's weaknesses when she says that where *Obasan* resists closure, "Itsuka imposes happy endings on all of its stories, casting them in a Christian context that works against political urgency" (160). *Obasan* was filled with unanswered questions, silences, lost people, and their lost stories, leaving any conclusions open ended and open to other re-memberings. As Zwicker observes:

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[96] The novel was first published in 1992 by Viking Canada. It was revised and reprinted a year later in 1993, by Penguin Canada, and in 1994 Anchor Books published it again. Then, there is the 2005 version of the book, printed under its revised title of *Emily Kato*.

[97] At this historical moment "mainstream narrative" refers to those texts that sustain the status quo, which also includes some Japanese Canadian films, which are non-critical reformulations of Multicultural rhetoric that gloss over any of the complexities of post-redress identities and place within the Canadian nation.

> *Itsuka*'s neat closure makes it a kind of carceral structure in which everything is seen, heard, voiced; there are no silences to mark a gap in representational control by a monologic narrator. *Itsuka*'s closure enables the very omissions *Obasan* warns against; it neglects the silences that accompany every utterance. Its containment also makes the novel nationalistic, in the sense that difference is tamed and recuperated by the kind of pluralist inclusiveness suggested by official multiculturalism. (167-8)

In other words, by the early 1990s, when Japanese Canadians had taken control of their own histories, narratives, and personal/communal identities, there are a plethora of albeit optimistic – if not critically or politically astute – cinematic and literary narratives produced, which perpetuate the survivor (as opposed to victim) motif. Kogawa too fell prey to the euphoria created when Japanese Canadians won redress and acknowledgement in 1988. In many of the texts this euphoria takes on a nationalistic tone that non-critically celebrated the possibilities of Multiculturalism. After the non-critical success of *Itsuka*, and after having spent over a decade writing about the re-membering of Japanese Canadian wartime events and the redress movement, Kogawa's prose moved away from Japanese Canadian issues. Her third book, *The Rain Ascends*, is the story of a young Anglo-Saxon girl who discovers that her father, a minister, is a pedophile who has molested young boys. All three of her novels focus on transgressive acts, whether they are at an institutional or personal level. For the purpose of this work, her other literary works are important only in relation to *Obasan*, to demonstrate that while Kogawa is a canonized quality writer, none of her texts has ever received the critical and popular attention that *Obasan* has had and which that book still continues to enjoy. That attention, in itself, has signaled great success, but it comes with certain negative implications, as well.

Obasan is a novel that makes recourse to poetic devices as it traces Naomi Nakane's re-memberance of the Kato-Nakane family history which revolves around both the Japanese Canadian West Coast *evacuation* and the bombing of Nagasaki from the narrative vantage point of the year 1972. This novel was published at a timely historical juncture – 1981 – when the redress movement was just beginning to gain a foothold. The amount of social dialogue and academic discourse that it has generated is monumental.[98] One cannot reference the literature on the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* without acknowledging the impact of Kogawa's award-winning novel. *Obasan* won the First Novel Award from Books in Canada (1982), Book of the Year Award from the Canadian Authors Association (1982), Best Paperback Fiction Award from Periodical Distributors of Canada (1983), and the American Book Award from the Before Columbus Foundation (1983). Even as recently as 2005 (twenty-four years after the book's first publication), *Obasan* won the One

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[98] At latest count there are, as of 2006, approximately eighty articles, book chapters, books, and dissertations, on *Obasan*. There are nine articles, less than 10% of the total production on *Obasan*, which also reference *Itsuka* (and 2 of those are dissertations). Of all the articles on Joy Kogawa and her writings, only three interviews reference any of Kogawa's books of poetry, or her other novel *The Rain Ascends*. Two of the interviews are conducted by Sally Ito: "Did That Character Choose Me?, published in *The Power to Bend Spoons: Interviews with Canadian Novelists* (1998), and "Divine Abandonment: An Interview with Joy Kogawa, published in *Paragraph: The Canadian Fiction Review* 1996 Fall; 18 (2): 3-6. The other article was conducted by Cherry Clayton, entitled "Interview with Joy Kogawa 'Kawaiso' (a word used to comfort children)," published in *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, May 1, 2002, Vol. 34, Issue 2.

Book One Vancouver Award. Moreover, *Quill and Quire*[99] – which officially acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP), a part of the Department of Canada Heritage – named *Obasan* the eleventh most influential novel of the twentieth century. It is therefore crucial to consider this novel's contribution to the Japanese Canadian narrative of wartime events, as well as its role as a palimpsest upon which all other Japanese Canadian texts are written, some more consciously (and intertextually) than others; *Obasan* has also set the critical bar for all other Japanese Canadian texts on *evacuation* that follow the origin(al)-story.

By the late-1980s, *Obasan* was being read in schools and universities across Canada. According to Paul William Martin's 2002 doctoral thesis *Re: Producing Culture(s), Obasan* was the seventh most popular text taught in university and college English and Comparative Literature courses on the literatures of Canada, from a list of approximately four hundred and nine popularly taught Canadian literature texts. It was preceded only by *As for Me and My House, Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town, Anthology of Canadian Literature in English (1 vol.), Wacousta, Green Grass Running Water, and Roughing it in the Bush.* (Martin 253). Even Margaret Atwood's writing only appears for the first time with her book *The Handmaid's Tale*, in seventeenth place, despite the fact that, according to Martin's study, she is the most frequently taught author, when all incidents of her texts-taught are combined. By the mid-nineties, *Obasan* had come to represent the Japanese Canadian voice, and it is widely acknowledged that the novel played a significant role in the fight for redress. Scott McFarlane, in his 1995 article "Covering *Obasan* and the Narrative of Internment," points out that "Obasan played a significant role in the redress movement as evidenced by its being quoted by both Ed Broadbent and Gerry Weiner during the announcement of the settlement with the government" (402), but he also points out that while *Obasan* "was invoked to sing the settlement's praises" it is "a narrative of the internment written largely from the perspective of a child" (410), and by that he implies that the act of demanding redress which had "challenged and disrupted the discourse or the 'child-like, vulnerable Japanese Canadian'" (409) identity was recuperated by the dominant discourse by immediately reinstating the child-like identity (the identity of model minority) to Japanese Canadians the moment that their challenge to the state was met. The role the novel plays at various political moments is complex, but it is clear that it has provided an inspiration to Japanese Canadians. Kerri Sakamoto, in a 1998 interview with Eva Tihanyi, said that "*Obasan* was a catalyst both for the Japanese Canadian community, as it' [sic] moved toward a redress agreement with the government, and for a younger generation of writers" (Tihanyi)[100]. *Obasan* has not only been used to further the redress movement, but it has also contributed to the creation of and acknowledgement of the theoretical classification of Asian American as a viable literary category.

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[99] The *Quill and Quire* website provides the following information on its publication: "*Quill & Quire* is the monthly magazine of the Canadian book trade. Its primary audience is publishers, booksellers, librarians, writers, students and educators, and other media in every province. With an average circulation of 5,000 copies per issue, *Quill & Quire* reaches an audience of over 25,000 readers. More than 6,000 copies of the magazine are sold on the newsstand each year. Quill & Quire also publishes *Inside Report*, the *Canadian Publishers Directory*, *The Book Trade in Canada*, and manages *Q&Q Omni*, the web site for Canadian book trade professionals" (*Q&Q Omni)*.

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[100] These are just two of many examples, where *Obasan* is acknowledged for its role in the redress movement. For example, in Guy Beauregard's 2001 article "After Obasan: Kogawa Criticism and its Futures," he acknowledges that the novel *Obasan* "played a key role in mobilizing support for the 1988 Redress Settlement, in which the federal government and the National Association of Japanese Canadians negotiated and signed an agreement providing a formal apology and compensation for Japanese Canadians for losses sustained in the 1940s" (Beauregard 5). Also, on the official *Canadian Heritage* website on the "Multiculturalism" page under the headline "Canadians of Asian Heritage Who Inspire Us," Joy Kogawa is listed, and her write-up acknowledges the socio-political impact of her first novel:

Obasan has often been used as an example of Asian (North) American (women's) writing, by critics such as Gayle K. Fujita, Shirley Geok-lin Lim, King-Kok Cheung, Donald C. Goellnicht, and Manina Jones, who often drawn links between Kogawa's *Obasan*, and Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, Hisaye Yamamoto's *Seventeen Syllables*, John Okada's *No-No Boy*, and others. R. Miki, however, problematizes the academic appropriation of *Obasan* as part of the Asian American experience; this appropriation obliterates national boundaries and ignores the impact of Canadian politics and legislation specific to the Japanese Canadian experience. In an Asian American paradigm, *Obasan* "tends to become another version of the 'Asian American' example" (*Broken Entries* 155). The theoretical discussions around Asian American silence, for example, dislocate Naomi's particular silence in relationship to the Canadian nation. When a text that deals with displacement becomes a cultural icon, its context is obliviated for the reader, and it therefore becomes a purely aesthetic artefact. The novel achieves aesthetic success that ends up dehistoricizing and decontextualizing it; this also makes it possible for *Obasan* to represent a diversity of non-dominant groups and experiences in Canada.

Obasan was considered an important work as part of the movement to redress the wrongs against Japanese Canadian, which culminated in the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement, signed in the House of Common on September 22, 1988.

The incorporation of this Japanese Canadian novel into the larger framework of Asian American functions in tandem with Multiculturalism. Zwicker deftly points out the cons of being absorbed by the Asian American literary classification:

> It is important to contextualize Kogawa in terms of ongoing Canadian political and cultural debates because her work is increasingly incorporated into course syllabi and debates in Asian *American* literature at the expense of her status as Japanese *Canadian*. Such absorbent critical moves – no doubt, in a spirit of generous inclusiveness – bear an uncanny resemblance to official multiculturalism's own homogenizing pluralism. (149)

And, not only is *Obasan* incorporated into Asian American syllabi, but it also comes to represent that classification. Martin notes that due to time constraints Canadian literature courses often used *Obasan* "to represent the entirety of literature by writers of colour in Canada" (205):

> *Obasan* frequently serves in these [Canadian Literature] courses to represent the entirety of literature by writers of colour in Canada. One response to my [Paul Martin's] question about representing various cultural groups that I [Martin] received from a professor with no such writers represented on his survey course supports this notion even further: "I probably don't feel that [pressure] as much as I should. […] there is some pressure to do that so I should be teaching Kogawa and … who else. Sorry, my mind is a blank at them moment. I haven't done that." (205)

This is the polemic of aesthetical canonization, and material success. The critical acceptance of the novel as the ultimate authority on wartime experiences in Canada and the U.S., as well as the ethno-cultural experience across time in both of these countries was in direct contradiction to what the author's polyphonic message originally intended.

Immediately after its 1981 publication, *Obasan* created greater awareness about the violations of human rights endured by Japanese Canadian during the Second World War, and it continues to educate readers twenty five years after its publication. However, the draw-back of that success is that *Obasan* has come to falsely represent the entirety of Japanese Canadian wartime experience and Otherness. The overwhelming success of this author's first novel in combination with privileged position attributed to both the author and the narrator is a mechanism of recuperation that silences other Japanese Canadian voices; in the shadow of *Obasan* other texts of value are missed or dismissed as inconsequential, or perhaps more aptly put, unnecessary, since an acceptable version of *evacuation* and Otherness has been written, its place within Canadian literature and culture already has been successfully negotiated by the dominant discourse.

The reception and impact of this novel – the first Japanese Canadian novel on the diverse Second-World-War experiences of Japanese Canadians – and its status as the authoritative text on the *evacuation* experience is in direct contradiction to the message of the novel, which acknowledges its status as a text that necessarily, like all texts, is only a construct, a fallible medium through which Kogawa is narrating one potential version of history and one interpretation of truth. While the criticism surrounding the text, when taken as a whole, however, undermines that aspect of Kogawa's narrative, it must be reiterated that *Obasan* acknowledges the fallibility of the textual representations of history.

Kogawa's *Obasan* well fits Linda Hutcheon's definition of a metafictional text, a text that acknowledges its own construction of history within the context of all other textual representations of the past. Linda Hutcheon argues that "the point of metafiction is that it constitutes its own first critical commentary, and in so doing, it will be argued, sets up the theoretical frame of reference in which it must be considered" (6). Metafiction in *Obasan*, as an ethno-cultural text, I would then argue, is especially important, because all theory should be culled from a text, not imposed upon it, and this is even truer of ethno-cultural literatures, that when viewed purely through western paradigms will be distorted by those critical apparata. Metafiction, then, should guide critics in their analysis of a text. Donald Goellnicht effectively argues this point in relationship to *Obasan*. In his article "Minority History as Metafiction," he concludes:

> We as readers share this text's awareness that its truth cannot be absolute, but just as Emily's narrative enkindles Naomi's thought and action and assists her to find her identity, Kogawa's historiographic metafiction enkindles our thought and action and helps us as a nation to come to terms with our identity. The fiction is didactic not in the traditional way of teaching a product, but in teaching an epistemological process, a way of knowing through telling and reading, and an existential process, a way of forming identity through

> discourse. Kogawa has replaced simple mimetic and humanistic realism with a complex work of historiographic metafiction that itself enters the dialogical fray surrounding the "silenced" subject of racism in Canada as a powerful, but self-conscious, "word warrior." (302)

While the metafictional aspect of this text makes readers aware of the fallibility of memory and the text's own distrust of metanarratives (any one singular version of history) the irony is that the mass of criticism surrounding this text itself has made *Obasan* the authoritative narration of the Japanese Canadian (and American) *evacuation*, and in some respects also the Japanese American internment. *Obasan* is a polyphonic novel.[101] E.D. Blodgett points out that in the first few pages of *Obasan*, the reader is introduced to various speakers, "each of whom speak from different registers or possibly from different ontological positions" (62-3). The first speaker speaks through the Bible, the second through the amniotic deep and stone, and the third evokes the historical date. Blodgett explains by quoting from *Obasan*:

> The first speaker speaks through the Bible as an intertext: "To him that overcometh/will I have to eat/ of the hidden manna/ and will give him/ a white stone/ and in the stone/ and new name written" (Revelations 2:17). The second speaker announces that "[t]he speech that frees comes forth from that amniotic deep. To attend its voice, I can hear it

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[101] Several authors have written about the polyglossia of *Obasan*. See (1) Banerjee, Chinmoy. "Polyphonic Form and Effective Aesthetic in Obasan." Canadian Literature. 1999. Spring; 160. 101-19. (2) Cheung, King-Kok. "Attentive Silence in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*." *Listening to Silences: New Essays in Feminist Criticism.* Ed. Elaine Hedges and Shelley Fisher Fishkin. New York: Oxford. 1994. 113-129. (3) Goellnicht, Donald C. "Minority History as Metafiction: Joy Kogawa's Obasan." Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature (Fall 1989): 287-306. and (4) Merivale, Patricia. "Framed Voices: The Polyphonic Elegies of Hébert and Kogawa." *Canadian Literature/Littérature Canadienne* 116 (Spring 1988): 68-82.

> say, is to embrace its absence. But I fail the task. The word is stone" (O.n.p.). (Blodgett 63)

He explains that "[w]ithin the space of three pages, three speaking positions are established, each clearly separated, but two permitting the conjunction of two semiotic fields, and one establishing a connection with the discourse of history" (Blodgett 63). However, I would argue that criticism has dissected, deconstructed, and re-constituted *Obasan* until the criticism has become far so removed from the actual text that Kogawa's narrative motifs of family/community secrets, silence, memory, and differing views and reactions to the *evacuation* have become subsumed by the criticism that makes Naomi's voice, and by proxy Kogawa's own voice,[102] the monolithic voice on *evacuation* and Japanese Canadian identity, homogenizing the community according to the narrator of the text as childlike, and subject to abuse (sexual and racial, in Naomi's case) – easily recuperated by the paternalistic nation-state. Kogawa's metafiction makes it blatant that it is imperative to understand the heterogeneity of Japanese Canadians, their experiences, and their reactions to those experiences, in order to imagine a heterogeneity of Japanese Canadian identities, often as a result of differing reactions to history. *Obasan*'s Stephen, for example, rejects his Japanese Canadian identity and is "always uncomfortable when anything is 'too Japanese'" (217). Stephen returns less and less to Granton. He once came with Claudine, a Parisian divorcée, but "Stephen was obviously nervous having her in

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[102] Naomi is often read as a semi-autobiographical representation of Joy Kogawa, and in the recent fight to save the Kogawa family home, the relationship between the novel and its author is being used to try and save the house: "In August, 2003, Joy Kogawa discovered that her first home, the house that became Naomi's house in Obasan, was for sale. Friends leaked the news to the writing community in Toronto and Vancouver and, when it was learned that the house might be demolished, a committee was formed to save the house and hopefully purchase it" (Kogawa.org).

Granton. They were in the house less than five minutes. . . . Obasan remained in the kitchen the entire afternoon preparing a meal that was as non-Japanese as she could manage but they left without eating" (223). Stephen's rejection of Obasan, Uncle, and his Japanesness is in contrast to Aunt Emily's reaction. She embraces her Japanese Canadian heritage, albeit considering herself and all Japanese Canadians, predominantly Canadian; everything that is part of the Japanese Canadian experience, including *Momotaro*, is also Canadian, because they are Canadian and they have had these experiences and they are embedded in the system and nation. Then, there are the issei – Obasan and Uncle who find Emily, and categorically all nisei, very un-Japanese: clearly an insult and an indication of generational difference. The novel recognizes a plethora of voices.

The novel, written from a Christian perspective does not self-referentially acknowledge the religious position of the various characters; as a Christian text, it cannot possibly contain the complex heterogeneous Japanese Canadian community, many of whom are Buddhists. The Judeo-Christian perspective of the text has, no doubt, made it more accessible to average readers because of its blatantly Christian motifs. R. Miki makes brief reference to the Christian epigraph that introduces the narrative; he points out:

> the (...) biblical frame reverses into a doubled discourse of white supremacy and reveals itself as a mechanism (as Christianity was used in colonization) of enforced assimilation. The "othered" racial "object" undergoes translation into whiteness; her former subject

> identity, already under erasure by the racism of the past, is abandoned for a new name written on "white stone." (*Broken Entries* 139)

The use of Christianity as a frame for the Japanese Canadian story is somewhat ironic, since religion was a divisive factor in the historical pre-war Japanese Canadian communities, and as in all communities it likely remains so. Sunahara points out in *Politics* that Japanese Canadians "were divided like any normal community by social, religious, geographical, ideological and generational differences" (12). Christianity has an intrinsic relationship with the state, and specifically the dominant discourse. The presentation of Kogawa's Judeo-Christian view of the world is palatable to the dominant discourse. Furthermore, the notion of forgiveness is Christian, and therefore plays well into notions of a contemporary government with past transgressions, that seeks forgiveness through public confession in the form of Canadian (government sponsored) television, NFB films, and literary/historical publications. The translation between forgiveness and acceptance is possible in a Judeo-Christian paradigm, and it allows for the elasticity of interpretation necessary for the dominant discourse to recuperate the *evacuation*. A space of forgiveness also offers a dynamic interchange – a third space, a third language, a meeting point where everything resonates – but it becomes a third space outside English or French Canada, a space for the victim and/or model minority. Despite the official government rhetoric that Canada is a country with two official languages and no official culture, it remains, in practice, a Christian county based on a Judeo-Christian value-system: *Obasan* is palatable because she is Christian and the mainstream reader can relate to her. One possible critical interpretation is that "the protagonist, Naomi Kato, will emerge with a new identity after she has made her descent into her repressed history and memory" (R. Miki, *Broken Entries* 139), which fits well with Multicultural politics. Also political is the amount of critical attention that has been bestowed on *Obasan*.

This critical work on *Obasan* has analyzed and interpreted the novel's multiple themes and multiple layers of symbolic meaning according to various theoretical paradigms: feminist/ women's writing, historical metafiction, post-modernism, post-colonialism, Asian Canadian/American and ethno-cultural writing (which includes the expression of silence); at times, however, many of these paradigms have allowed for the academic discourse to act as co-participant in the maintenance of specific values. So is the case when human rights violations endured by Japanese Canadian are viewed as an aberration of Canadian history. When classified as an aberration, the story of *Obasan* has been reintegrated into the paradigm of Multiculturalism as a survival myth: Japanese Canadians – now model minority citizens – have been able to overcome the hardships endured as a result of racist historical legislation.

The two imperative questions, however, are "why" and "what": Why has *Obasan* received so much critical attention, and what is the result of the critical attention bestowed on Kogawa's first novel? Several critics have addressed these questions; most notably, Scott McFarlane, who explores the notion of *Obasan* as another Japanese Canadian internment in "Covering *Obasan* and the Narrative of Internment"; R. Miki, who has analyzed the polemics of *Obasan*'s acclaim in his 1998 book of criticism *Broken Entries: Race, Subjectivity, and Writing*; and Guy

Beauregard, who has done an admirable job of adding to that dialogue in "After *Obasan*: Kogawa Criticism and its Futures." These critics identify key points that have made possible the cannibalization and regurgitation of *Obasan*.

The role of *Obasan* in the redress movement has been identified by all of these critics. The novel played a significant and valuable role, which has turned *Obasan* into one of the most highly-read Canadian novels. The many positive implications of this are obvious: *Obasan* focused attention on the historical injustices of the *evacuation*; it has helped narrate a Japanese Canadian identity, which thereby helped the community win redress. However, each critic also points out a number of negative outcomes for the novel's popularity. McFarlane argues two main points:

> In the novel, Japanese Canadians and the internment are doubly displaced. First, understanding *Obasan* as a national *bildungsroman* established the perspective of a redeemed present and alleviates the immediacy of guilt felt by anyone who feels responsible for the internment by suggesting the girl and the nation will come of age by the end of the novel. . . . in the redeemed present, however, Naomi, and by extension Japanese Canadians, are signs of a violated past and violable future. . . . Second, it has been argued that Naomi is no longer a child when she develops the pathos required for hermeneutic cultural reading and that the development of this skill must assume the object status of her community as a means of pathos. . . . [Naomi learns to] read Japanese Canadian culture not in a way that erases it, but rather, forces it to stand as a sign for violated *Canadian culture and past*. . . .

> For Japanese Canadians then, Canadian cultural identity continually signifies their own *alieNation*. (407-8)

R. Miki's exploration the limitations of *Obasan* as a cultural product, begs several questions, including this seemingly rhetorical question: "But whose interest does literary theory and criticism serve?" (136). In the analysis of a novel about identity and displacement, literary criticism serves the purpose of situating that narrative in relationship to the national narrative – in Canada's case a Multicultural narrative – in such a manner that the myth of national identity can be sustained. It is in the interests of the maintenance of power that the status quo is safeguarded. R. Miki also points out the aforementioned polemic of Kogawa's strong association with the protagonist Naomi, and its ramifications:

> Naomi's recovery of a "universal nature" that transcends the specificity of injustice needs to be read as an effect of internalization. Indeed, the very presence of an author who narrates the Japanese Canadian community as disappeared implies a strategy of bridging – not between two separate "cultures" – but between two interlocking racialized sites: that of the other and of the norm, whiteness. . . . As a field of multiple determinants, the text of *Obasan* both constructs and is constructed by critical approaches that open pathways of least resistance for the majority "we" whose own subject positions are linked to the nation-state powers responsible for victimizing Canadians of Japanese ancestry. (141-4)

R. Miki, in 1998, was calling for a responsibility on the part of readers and critics to avoid erasure of race, and to avoid universalizing the character of Naomi, making her into the authority on Japanese Canadianness. In "After *Obasan*", Beauregard chastises critics for their lack of responsibility.

Beauregard's text encapsulates many of the arguments McFarlane and R. Miki have made and develops them further, questioning why critics have focused so much attention on *Obasan.* He postulates several probabilities:

> One possible answer is that Kogawa's novel is notable for making uncommonly fine use of language that often verges on the poetic. . . . A second possible answer is that Kogawa's novel addresses questions of history and historiography at a moment in which literary critics were also trying to sort through such issues. Kogawa's representation of events in the 1940s thus became part of larger debates on the reconstruction of history, the knowability of the past, and the connections between historical and literary narratives. But, to my mind, the most obvious answer to the question of why *Obasan* might matter to contemporary critics is the precision with which Kogawa's novel represents a specific moment in the history of racism in Canada – that is, the internment of Japanese Canadians and its aftermath – largely from the point of view of an individual (the character Naomi Nakane) who attempts to come to terms with the implications of this history. (6)

Beauregard goes on to criticize the fact that strategic Japanese Canadian historiography, formulated with the intention of creating a Japanese Canadian identity and narration of the internment tactical for the redress movement, is uncritically adopted by literary critics such that internment then becomes an aberration of the Canadian Multicultural paradigm:

> The emphasis Sunahara and Miki place on the events that began with the uprooting had obvious strategic value for the National Association of Japanese Canadians as it pushed for a negotiated redress settlement with the federal government. But curiously – and in my opinion disturbingly – the particular narratives used strategically in Japanese Canadian historiography to confront the racism of the Canadian state have been adopted and adapted by literary critics to contain the implications of the history of anti-Japanese racism in Canada by characterizing the events of the 1940s as an isolated aberration. (12)

I dare say that the discourse of aberration found in literary criticism is a critical manifestation of the dominant Canadian discourse that has long narrated the nation through its contrition for historical "aberrations" of racism and human rights violations: the Aboriginal situations – first the killing of communities through infestation and bloodshed, then the reserve system, then the residential school system – the internment of a number of other ethno-cultural groups (Austro-Hungarian Canadians, in World War One; and German Canadians, and Italian Canadians during the Second World War), the Chinese head-tax and the death of so many Chinese men in the building of the railroad, the turning away of the Saint Louis ship filled with

Jewish refugees, and the already- mentioned Komagata Maru incident. Kogawa points out the complexity of the Other(s)' relationship to the dominant discourse and to one anOther, when Naomi has to face the pitying expressions of white Canadians who identify her as a foreigner and/or an Other:

> Ah, here we go again. "Our Indians". "Our Japanese". "A terrible business". It's like being offered a pair of crutches while I'm striding down the street. The comments are so incessant and always so well-intentioned. "How long have you been in this country? Do you like our country? You speak such good English. Do you run a café? My daughter has a darling Japanese friend. Have you ever been back to Japan?"
>
> Back?
>
> Does it so much matter that these questions are always asked? Particularly by strangers? These are icebreaker questions that create an awareness of ice. (225)

Beauregard is justified in his criticism; however, it is not only the criticism surrounding *Obasan* that applies this aberration paradigm, but also the narration of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* (with a predominant focus on internment) by the dominant discourse, in general, and the narration of all ethno-cultural groups within the national paradigm. In regards to the Japanese Canadian internment the aberration model becomes the narrative trope of numerous documentaries and educational tools that recuperate the internment to serve the purposes of the dominant discourse.

In contrast to Beauregard who proposes several possibilities for the future of criticism, I propose that just three things are necessary: First, *Obasan* needs to be considered within its historical context so that the criticism surrounding the text can also be understood within the paradigm of the 1980s and 1990s. Second, critics may be able to re-read *Obasan* from the vantage point of another context, but at the same time, must move beyond *Obasan*, to consider not only the context of the novel, but what the novel itself contextualizes from that vantage point. Third, and last, the need to identify *Obasan* as not the only and ultimate narrative voice of the wartime Japanese Canadian experience but also as the palimpsest over which all Japanese Canadian text, literary and cinematic, are articulated, and to consider, therefore, its intertextual relationship to what follows.

It is necessary to understand the political context of *Obasan*, in order to understand the perspective of the novel, and its reception. As R. Miki pointed out: "The redress movement probably helped *Obasan* more than *Obasan* helped the Redress movement – but they do go hand in hand" (qtd. UrbanVancouver.come). Zwicker has given specific attention to this issue in her article "Multiculturalism: Pied Piper of Canadian Nationalism," where she analyzes both *Obasan* and *Itsuka* within their respective socio-political contexts. Rightly, she identifies the challenge that *Obasan* presents to linear time and progress, in other words social evolution, which becomes part of the rhetoric of (sometimes implicit) official Multiculturalism and the bureaucracy supporting it. That is, the success of *Obasan* lies very much in its metafictional discourse about the impossibility of a fixed truth-story:

> The complicated imbrication of speech with silence that Kogawa charts throughout *Obasan* stands in direct contrast to the implicitly universalizing convention that lies behind the discourse of multiculturalist history: the common sense notion that stories, even if hidden temporarily, can be dredged up from silence into speech to broaden a shared historical narrative and can be told, chronologically, because everyone occupies the same temporality. (159)

In fact, the Japanese Canadian texts with innovative substance share the common perspective that historical narratives are unstable and open to reformulation. They resist Multiculturalism in that they articulate the reality that ethno-cultural groups (specifically those of colour who exist within a racialized discourse) are not unproblematically integrated into the nation-state. The (hi)stories must be listened to,[103] heard, and then – perhaps – re-told from another perspective.

In 1981, *Obasan* presented a direct challenge to the idealistic vision of Multiculturalism that the nation had perpetuated by identifying the reality that ethno-cultural groups (those that remained identifiable because of colour or speech patterns etc.) had not been unquestioningly accepted by the nation. It was highly political even to tell the story of evacuation, and the novel invokes the institutional injustices, and the repercussions of wartime acts, often excused by the perpetrators with the attitude that "War they say, is war, and some people survive" (242). Chapter One, for example, begins on the blatantly political date of August 9, 1972: the twenty-seventh anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki. The novel is framed first, by two official voices: it opens with the Bible, and it closes with the excerpt from the memorandum sent to the House of Commons in April 1946 that acknowledges the deportations as a violation of International Law. However, the frame within the framework of those two official voices are Naomi's two visits to the coulee, one at the outset with her Uncle and the other alone at the end after she has been read the content of her grandmother's 1949 letter sent from "somewhere in Nagasaki" (235). The coulee becomes symbolic of the violations of international law by the Allied forces at Nagasaki that have repercussions in Canada for Japanese Canadians who were already betrayed by the violations of domestic law (via the War Measures Act that denied their rights of citizenship). The novel deftly politicizes the bombing of Nagasaki (and by extension Hiroshima) while humanizing the relationship of Japanese Canadians to Japan. The focus on the human link between the two countries is in opposition to narratives from the dominant discourse that precede *Obasan*, such as -- *of Japanese Descent*, which circumvents the human relationships that necessarily could not be erased by the war, and politicizes any loyalty Japanese Canadian had to Japan. Furthermore, the novel addresses the fact that the *evacuation* was a racist act, and the media coverage surrounding the treatment of the wartime Japanese Canadian population was designed to absolve the government and the public of any sense of responsibility for the events.

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[103] Zwicker identifies the necessary response to telling a history that makes it complete: the component of listening. "History must be told, even though that telling is inevitably partial, in both senses of the word. Kogawa's contribution to this notion of historical necessity is to draw attention to the importance of listening for, not just telling history" (158).

While it is necessary to place *Obasan* within its socio-political context, it is equally necessary to recognize that *Obasan* too (as metafiction) placed historical media in perspective. The novel exposes the media misrepresentation of Japanese

Canadian post-war reality by inserting newspaper articles about the re-settlement of Japanese Canadians across the country and revealing that the headlines falsely contextualize the photographs and the images cannot be relied upon:[104] "The newspaper clipping has a photograph of one family, all smiles, standing around a pile of beets. The caption reads: 'Grinning and Happy'" (193). This is reminiscent of the smiling internees in -- *of Japanese Descent*, whose smiles are a reaction to the presence of the camera as opposed to an expression of happiness. The newspaper article, framed by the photo and the caption, recuperates the Japanese Canadian population as happy contributors to the Canadian capitalist-economy. In the newspaper article, Phil Baker, the president of the Alberta Sugar Beet Growers' Association, acknowledges the contributions to the Alberta sugar beet labour force as a measure of their value, which equated to their social acceptance.

> Japanese evacuees from British Columbia supplied the labour for 65% of Alberta's sugar beet acreage last year, Phil Baker, of Lethbridge, president of the Alberta Beet Growers' Association, stated today.
>
> "They played an important part in producing our all-time record crop of 363,000 tons of beet in 1945," he added. . . . Generally speaking, Japanese evacuees have developed into most efficient beet workers, many of them being better than the transient workers who cared for beets in southern Alberta before Pearl Harbour ... (193-4)

After reading the article, Naomi questions the accuracy of the article's facts.

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[104] The flexible meaning of the photograph when viewed from different perspectives problematizes the concept of any one version of history/reality, contributing to the novel's metafictional construction that undermine any one metanarrative.

> […] Facts about evacuees in Alberta? The fact is that I [Naomi] never got used to it and I cannot, I cannot bear the memory. There are some nightmares from which there is no waking, only deeper and deeper sleep. (194)

Not only does the article, contrary to Naomi's memory and inability to re-member the nightmare of that time, claim that they are happy because they are productive participants in the white Protestant capitalist nation-state/economy, but the article also implies "social evolution" because Japanese Canadians have risen up to replace less desirable transients. In addition, their productivity in Alberta is a result of their evacuation from B.C., and one seems to equate the other. Ian Mackenzie's desire to eradicate the "Japanese" from B.C. has been successful by liquidating their property, rendering them destitute, and thereby ensuring their class-status: impoverished non-land owning working class who contribute to the prosperity of the wealthy land-owner, and fulfilling in many ways the definition of the slave.[105]

The way Naomi re-members that time is that the beet farm became a sort of prison where the clouds were the prison walls, and they were alone in the world, so exhausted from overwork that there was no energy to resist:

> At night we eat and sleep. We hardly talk any more. The boxes we brought from Slocan are not unpacked. The King George/Queen Elizabeth mugs stay muffled in the *Vancouver Daily Province*. The cameraphone does not sing. Obasan wraps layers of cloth around her feet and her torn sweater hands unmended over her sagging dress.

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[105] The remote origin of modern democracy is, after all, ancient Greece, a slave-based economy, where the structures of democracy were created to ensure the maintenance of political and economic power by the land-owning class.

> Down the miles we are obedient as machines in this old ballet without accompaniment of flute or song.
>
> "Grinning and happy" and all smiles standing around a pile of beets? That is one telling. It's not how it was. (196-7)

It is, of course, ironic that Obasan's symbols of the British Empire and Commonwealth loyalty, the King George/Queen Elizabeth mugs, are wrapped in the Vancouver Daily Province, the newspaper that was identified only a few pages earlier in the novel to have published the article "'Indifferent' Jap Repats Start Homeward Trek" about the deportation of Japanese Canadians, some of whom would have been citizens and not "repats," none of the passengers "indifferent." At best, they would have felt angry and betrayed by Canada. At worst they would have been sad to leave Canada and terrified to arrive (or in some cases return) to a defeated Japan.

Other articles are included in the text to illustrate the ease with which the mainstream media articulates injustice so that it is acceptable to the reading public. The March 16, 1948 *Toronto Star* article by Borden Spears classifies the restrictions on the return of Japanese Canadians to the West Coast for one more year as a protective measure, because white Canadians might exact "crimes of revenge" against Japanese Canadians. The article concludes by paraphrasing Maj. Gen. G.R. Pearkes (PC Nanaimo): "In war, he [Pearkes] said, the innocent suffer with the guilty; there was still hatred among the white people of B.C., and he thought the government was wise in giving the old sores another year to heal" (198). This article maintains the governmental post-war position used to explain the *evacuation* (and distance it from any comparison with the Nazi internment of the Jews in concentration camps); the post-war position was that the government had *evacuated* Japanese Canadians from the coast as a protective measure. The contextualization of the article in Obasan highlights that Japanese Canadians were being punished for the racism and intolerance of white Canadians who, like Tom Reid (Lib. New Westminster) quoted in that same article, are determined "that the heritage which belongs to Canadians should be returned to the white people" (198). Where Naomi more diplomatically declares that what she reads in the historical newspapers and documents is one telling, but that they do not represent how it was, Aunt Emily more boldly asserts that the newspapers print outright lies.

Either way, the two versions of history – the official versions and the personal Japanese Canadian narratives – are not congruous. In addition, when juxtaposed with Naomi's personal experiences as an ethnic minority, the many historical newspaper articles and documents which reveal racism undermine the notion of social evolution/progress purported by 1970s Canadian Multicultural rhetoric. At the outset of the novel, Naomi's name is mispronounced by the school children she teaches; the widower she goes on a date with asks her where she comes from. "That is the sure-fire question I [Naomi] always get from strangers. People always assume when they meet me that I'm a foreigner. . . . The widower was so full of questions that I [Naomi] half expected him to ask for an identity card" (7). Naomi, however, is a third generation Canadian. Nevertheless, in contrast to the Multicultural rhetoric that claims that all citizens can be unproblematically included in the nation-state, Naomi is constantly aware of her Otherness, especially within Obasan's home, which is an extension of her aunt and all the Japanese-ness and Otherness that her aunt embodies and signifies. When the new Mrs. Barker visits Obasan's home, Naomi is conscious that smells which are "foreign" to Mrs. Barker pervade the family home:

> Mrs. Barker shifts uncomfortably. She puts her fists on her knees and her eyes dart from the cup to Mr. Barker sitting beside her. She is breathing unevenly.
>
> What is it she smells? What foreign odour sends its message down into her body alerting her limbs? If only I could banish all that offends her delicate sensibilities. Especially the strong smell of miso and daicon and shoyu. Especially all the dust that Obasan and I are too short to see. (224)

Naomi wishes that she could mask the foreignness of their home, and of Obasan, but it is impossible. Just as it is impossible to imagine, as Mrs. Barker suggests, Obasan living in the Sunnydale Lodge. "Obasan would be as welcome there as a Zulu warrior. It's a white-walled, white-washed and totally white old folks' home" (224). Constantly aware of her foreignness, Naomi has already questioned the potential of Multiculturalism's promises. She questions Aunt Emily's belief that by exposing the historical injustices suffered by Japanese Canadians they will be acknowledged as Canadian:

> What is done, Aunt Emily, is done, is it not? And no doubt it will all happen again, over and over with different faces and names, variations on the same theme.
>
> "Nothing but the lowest motives of greed, selfishness and hatred have been brought forward to defend these disgraceful Orders,"

> the *Globe and Mail* noted. Greed, selfishness, and hatred remain as constant as the human condition, do they not? Or are you thinking that through lobbying and legislation, speech-making and story-telling, we can extricate ourselves from our foolish ways? Is there evidence for optimism? (199)

While Cheung and other critics from the 1980s and 1990s believe that "despite human shortcomings, Naomi can now break her silence by saying yes – there is evidence indeed" (Cheung, "Attentive" 124), I interpret Naomi as much more sceptical. The politics of the 1980s and 1990s were hopeful about the possibility for a Multicultural future in Canada, but Naomi's move from silence to speech ultimately favours Canadian (Western) notions of spoken communication over meaningful Japanese (Eastern) silence. In contrast to the values of theoretical multiculturalism, this move from silence to speech suggests an evolutionary hierarchy of east-west values that favours Canadian (Western) styles of communication in the practice of Multiculturalism. However, analyzing the text from a less evolutionary paradigm, it is more legitimate to accept that the novel provides no one solid conclusion. It is open-ended and it is that very incomplete position, which is the wisdom of the text; it allows for a variety of future possibilities that are not prescribed by Naomi or Kogawa. And the polyphony and the acknowledgement of the absences of some stories (the loss of some of the history), and the open endedness of the novel are very important political statements about the role of the novel and the role of any one version of history.

Obasan was published at a fortuitous historical moment, when the political and cultural milieu was receptive to a novel that could legitimize 1971 pronouncements of official Multiculturalism. The publishing world was receptive to a narrative that identified the failings of historical governments, and the negative outcomes of racist government policy. The novel was read, within that context, as an expression of possible futures for Multiculturalism, despite *Obasan*'s critique of the Multicultural pied piper *à la Zwicker*. Therefore, the novel is able to legitimize Multiculturalism, while simultaneously criticising it, and eventually become a symbol of resistance,[106] when it is used to create momentum for the redress campaign, which moves Japanese Canadians from the position of model minority to that of the Other who is resisting the state. While it is possible to continue to re-read *Obasan* critically from the vantage point of the present context, there is, at the same time, the need to make the political choice to move beyond *Obasan* and to focus greater attention on other ethno-cultural texts and Japanese Canadian texts. More nuance can only be added to the community identity through the production study of other narratives, whether they be Kogawa's other literary production, or those of other writers, filmmakers and/or visual artists, all the while remaining cognizant and respectful of the important role that *Obasan* has played and will continue to play in the arena of Japanese Canadian literature, Asian American literature, Canadian ethno-cultural literature, and Canadian literature, as a result of its iconic status. The project of the next two chapters, in fact, will be to move on from *Obasan* and examine the literary and cinematic texts that have followed this novel, acknowledging, when appropriate, the intertextual references to the fore-mother of Japanese Canadian literature, *Obasan*.

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[106] Her text becomes emblematic for the fight for redress, therefore disproving Multiculturalism, because she moves from model minority to transgressive Other.

c) Midi Onodera's *The Displaced View* (1988)

No Japanese Canadian text after *Obasan* has ever received the academic or popular media attention of that first novel on the *evacuation* by Kogawa, and yet there have been innovative texts produced by Japanese Canadians on the wartime and post-war experiences of Japanese Canadians. Midi Onodera's film *The Displaced View*, an experimental documentary film, deftly addresses many of the issues that were confronting Japanese Canadians as the *redress era* awakened more widespread re-membering for Japanese Canadians dispersed across the country who were beginning to form a virtual community around the issue of redress. Two decades later many of those issues present a continuing challenge: multiple identities (Japanese Canadian, Canadian, "-- *of Japanese Descent*," lesbian), generational differences, inter-marriage, loss of language, loss of culture, issues of re-membering the pieces of the past: negotiating that which is known, that which has been imagined, and that which cannot be added to the re-membering either because it has been permanently forgotten or it was never understood or known. *The Displaced View* is a very much a product of its era: late-*redress*.

In the late eighties, major government and filmmaking institutions financially supported Onodera's experimental documentary. She had already established a solid reputation as a filmmaker by the time she began making *The Displaced View*. She had released her first film, *Reality-Illusion*, in 1979; it was a seven-minute short film, shot on Super Eight. By 1988, she had already released at least twenty films.[107] However, none of her earlier films had addressed issues of ethnicity. This film was her ethnic coming-out film.[108] Now, Onodera is as a well-recognized Canadian filmmaker with twenty seven years of filmmaking experience, who has had screenings internationally at such prestigious venues as the Andy Warhol Museum, the International Festival of Documentary and Short Films, Bilbao Spain, the Rotterdam International Film Festival, the Berlin International Film Festival, the National Gallery of Canada, and the Toronto International Film Festival. Her renown, combined with the quality of *The Displaced View* makes it a notable and lasting contribution to the body of cinematic and literary texts on Japanese Canadian wartime experiences and the post-war repercussions.

The Displaced View bears consideration for several reasons: First, its release coincided with the end of the redress campaign and was widely broadcast on

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[107] *Reality-Illusion* (1979), *Contemplation* (1979), *Untitled* (1979), *A Film* (1980), *Food Trilogy: What's for Lunch Charley, One Burger, Hold the Pickle, Après Diner* (1981), *Home Movies* (1981), *The Bird that Chirped on Bathurst* (1981), *One if by Land, Two if by Sea* (1982), *Endocrine* (1982), *Home Was Never Like This* (1983), *Idiot's Delight* (1983), *Ville Quelle Ville* (1984), *The Dead Zone* (1985), *After Car Crash, Woman Kills Two* (1985), *Ten Cents a Dance* (Parallax) (1985), *Then/Now* (1988), *The Displaced View* (1988).

[108] Onodera, as a lesbian, was (and is) not artistically focused on foregrounding her ethnic identity, or dealing with issues of ethnicity. As one of the narrators in the film, she bluntly states that like her mother she had spent a lot of time denying her ethnicity and acting white. However, this film is an exploration of her ethnicity, an issue that she could not avoid because of the visibility of redress in the 1980s. In the film, she speaks about being in the closet, and the closet takes on a double meaning in relationship to both her sexuality and her ethnicity. The redress movement forced her to come out of the (ethnic) closet, and discuss her family history, which she had previously denied in favour of being seen simply as a lesbian and/or Canadian artist. Mieko Ouchi is another artist who wanted to be recognized as an artist (theatrical and cinematographic), not as a Japanese Canadian artist. However, after being chosen to play Aya Kawashima in Anne Wheeler's film *The War Between Us*, the only role she claims she ever got because of her looks not despite her looks. In *Shepherd's Pie and Sushi* Ouchi explains: "I think it was probably the first time I'd been cast in something important *for* how I looked, not kind of despite how I looked." Ouchi has produced several films and plays having to do with her own family's stories, and Japanese Canadian identity*: Shepherd's Pie and Sushi* (1998), *By This Parting* (1998), *Samurai Swing* (1999). That being said, her play *The Red Priest: Eight Ways to Say Goodbye* has received significant critical acclaim; she wrote herself the role of a courtiers wife who is being tutored by Vivaldi for a violin concert six weeks hence.

TVOntario, Access Alberta, Saskatchewan Communication TV, Vision TV, and PrideVision TV. Second, it was produced with the assistance of The Canada Council, the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council, Multiculturalism Canada, the Secretary of State, the Ontario Arts Council, All-Metal Machine Specialities Ltd., the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, the Japanese Canadian Centennial Society (Ontario), the Music Gallery, the National Film Board Ontario Centre and Pacific Regional Studio, Via Rail, and Wardair Inc., which indicates that it was a Multicultural project – like *Obasan* –deemed viable by the institutional infrastructures of the dominant discourse. Third, it continues to participate in Japanese Canadian identity formation because the production sponsorship of these major institutions impacted its distribution at the time of release, and that early success has ensured its continued availability to the public through many North American libraries and the U.S. and Canadian distribution companies, Women Make Movies (in the U.S.), and Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre (in Toronto, Canada). Fourth, most importantly, as a skilled filmmaker, Onodera has created a valuable narrative about the Japanese Canadian re-membering of history. This film shares some qualities with *Obasan*, and builds on that narrative. Finally, the quality of the film combined with its timely release in 1988, the year that redress was achieved, in tandem with *Obasan*, book-ends the *redress era*. The creation of this documentary was simultaneous with the final stages of redress, a time of significant media attention. The innovation of this film is that it allows the issei to speak for themselves, in Japanese, which alienates the non-Japanese viewer, i.e. the dominant discourse of English-French Canada. Cultural diversity is something that Multiculturalism supposedly permits, but the film's format itself can be seen as a criticism of Multicultural-bilingual policies, which allow for the maintenance of cultures and languages in the private sphere. The film highlights the polemics of private Multiculturalism: language is eventually lost, and the younger generations cannot communicate with their grandparents who, instead of being the teachers of language and culture, become the representatives of ethnicity. When they die, the ancestral language and culture (that have not been transmitted) die, as well. Ancestry or ethnic-identity, then, becomes historical, as opposed to a lived reality. While the film is an intensely private journey into one family, the issues discussed are representative of community issues of that era. Furthermore, the film is a political criticism of the failings of Multiculturalism, which maintain English and French language and culture.

Between the publication of *Obasan* and the release of Onodera's film *The Displaced View*, attitudes about the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* and *redress* had changed considerably. By the mid-1980s the Japanese Canadian redress movement had gained momentum in the media, and it was a part of the popular consciousness of Canadians. Omatsu writes that by "1984 editorials across the country had begun to take up the issue and to advise the Trudeau government that 'Japanese Canadians have waited long enough for compensation; they should have to wait no longer'" (97). Of course the different newspapers and articles that gave media attention to the issue of Japanese Canadian redress – *Toronto Star, Montreal Gazette, The Toronto Sun, The Globe and Mail* to name a few[109] – took varying positions on what form compensation should take. One of the ironies of the redress movement is that while the Trudeau government was willing to concede that the historical Second-World-War Mackenzie King government had not been democratic, they were anxious to resolve the issue and offer an apology and a settlement to Japanese Canadians in a very non-democratic manner, without consulting the elected community representatives. Omatsu explains that Japanese Canadians used the media to make the Canadian public aware of their stance on the issue:

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[109] For more information about the positions that these various newspapers took on the issue of Japanese Canadian redress, see chapter 5 of Omatsu's *Bitterweet Passage*.

> Well-known members of our [Japanese Canadian] community, including columnist Ken Adachi, author Joy Kogawa, professor Tom Shoyama, and broadcaster David Suzuki, issued a press release on June 18 1984, criticizing Collenette's offer as "very unilateral and undemocratic" and urging the Liberals to negotiate with the community's elected representatives, the NAJC. (98)

The ensuing press attention and the continuous media attention given to the matter of the Japanese Canadian redress settlement over the 1980s – as several Multiculturalism Ministers, some of whom included Jim Flemming, David Collenette, Jack Murta, Otto Jelinek, and David Crombie tried to negotiate a settlement with Japanese Canadians – created the climate for Japanese Canadians to deal with their individual, familial, and communal histories. The move from secrecy and silence, shikata ga nai (it couldn't be helped/resignation) and *enryo* (restraint), to personal acknowledgement, political action, and public acknowledgement in the *re-membering* and *redress* eras was difficult, and while Kogawa writes one fictional version of this process, Onodera records her own process of discovery, which involves an investigation into her family past. Her film *The Displaced View* records the struggle she has to re-member her maternal history through her mother and grandmother, thereby better understanding herself, her matrilineal parentage, and the meaning of being Japanese Canadian. Onodera, as sansei narrator in the film, asks the following questions: "Am I a Japanese Canadian, or a person -- *of Japanese Descent*? passing as, in the closet when. I am guilty of playing it safe." She exists in a liminal space, floating between signifiers, in order to adapt to the demands of Multiculturalism.

The film is framed by tangible wishes and tangible fairytales because the absence of a spoken history creates the space for an imagined family story. One framing device for *The Displaced View* is that in the absence of any knowledge of her grandparents' past, the narrator as a young child fantasized that her grandmother and grandfather were the old man and his wife in *The Crane Wife* fairytale; her grandmother was the crane wife and her grandfather the one who had freed the snow crane from the trap. Within that frame story is sansei narrator Onodera's search for a Daruma Doll, in order to make her wishes come true. The doll is a kind of god, and the idea is that you paint one eye and make a wish. When the wish comes true, you paint the other eye. Onodera wishes that her grandmother could live forever, and this wish articulates one of the predominant concerns of later Japanese Canadian documentaries released in the 1990s; the fear of invisibility through a complex process of assimilation that begins with a loss of language and a lack of communication between generations, creating cultural gaps, and an erasure of history. As the issei age and die, families begin to recognize that the issei are bearers of culture, language, and history, and when they die, so do the links to the family's sense of ethnic identity. As Ohama puts it in *Obāchan's Garden*, "For us [the family], Obāchan has been our Japaneseness, but we have never really understood very much about her or the culture." Onodera fears that she will lose her grandmother. On the literal level, she fears that she will lose her grandmother and her history/stories either to a failing memory or the inevitability of death. Midi, as narrator, asks: "What will be left after you're gone?" She also fears that she will never be able to *tell*[110] her grandmother how much she means to her. Onodera, as one of the three narrators, in the concluding lines of the film says "in order for a person to grow, they say that you must confront your worst fear. In some ways mine hasn't changed since childhood. I'm still afraid of losing you and I will always regret not being able to tell you what you mean to me" (*The Displaced View*). The film is a medium of communication with her grandmother: both a listening and a telling. However, on a symbolic level, the film also addresses the fear of losing all that the grandmother represents: a language, a culture, a history both personal and communal that will be lost because the right questions were never asked.

The film also addresses generational differences. The *Displaced View* deftly uses three voice-over narrators: Midi's own voice, her mother's voice, and her grandmother's voice. Each woman recounts her own story, in her own words, and dominant language. The grandmother speaks in Japanese, the mother speaks in slightly broken and accented English, and Onodera speaks in English. The English title of the movie refers to "the" displaced view, but the Japanese title that backdrops the English subtitle says: "issei, nisei, sansei." The specific reference to the generations gives added nuance to the English title. The title can be interpreted as one displaced view shared by the three generations, in relationship to the dominant discourse. However, *The Displaced View*, within the framework of both the Japanese and English titles, reflects the different loci of the three narrators, as the embodiment of different generational perspectives, each of whom is displaced for the other two generations. Generational differences came to the fore when the parameters of redress had to be negotiated amongst the community in the 1980s. The issei, nisei, and sansei were often divided by linguistic and cultural divides that manifested themselves as divisive political positions. Redress sometimes exacerbated existing generational tensions, and they became one of the realities of the *redress era*, when Japanese Canadians were trying to find a common voice to represent their collective wishes; generational divides (among other issues) made a community voice seem nearly impossibility, at times (see Chapter One). The issei were often predominantly Japanese speakers. They endured the multiple displacements of the *evacuation*, being forced to start their lives over three times: first, when they immigrated, then when they were relocated after Pearl Harbour, and again after they were dispersed across the country after the Second World War. The racism and injustice at the hands of a supposedly democratic government made the issei reticent about voicing any discontent about their historical mistreatment. Fearing stirring up racist sentiments again, they preferred to avoid conflict. Nisei are often very western in their behaviour, dress, and they have an excellent command of English, having been educated in Canada. As sansei Omatsu puts it, it was the nisei, more than any other generation, who had to learn "the lesson of the bamboos" (94). Nisei, often, can speak Japanese and English and so, during the redress campaign, it became their role to translate language and culture between the issei and sansei generations. Sansei, for the most part, speak no Japanese , making communication with the issei difficult and sometimes only possible through translation. R. Miki mourns his loss of language in *Broken Entries*: "Many sansei, myself included, wanted so much to be integrated into white society that we lost what was closet to us, our mother tongue. During the redress movement, so many times I despaired that I couldn't explain myself in Japanese to the issei, that I had to speak through the barrier of translation. For this I am truly sorry" (22).[111] While the film is an ambitious project on the part of the third generation narrator to communicate directly with her grandmother, circumventing her mother's translation of their conversation and relationship, the desire to overcome linguistic divides results in a greater understanding of her mother. Onodera opens the narrative of *The Displaced View* by making the following claims: "My love and respect for my grandmother lead me to ask the questions. I have begun to understand my mother better through the answers." The film explores two kinds of generational divide that lead to an inability to communicate: the complex lack of understanding between the nisei mother and her sansei daughter, and the more straightforward linguistic divide of the sansei granddaughter and issei grandmother.

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[110] Because they do not share a common language, Onodera has the desire to communicate directly with her grandmother: i.e. to *tell* her certain things without the translation and mediation of Onodera's mother.

In *The Displaced View* the lack of communication between the generations is (like in other texts) not only a generation gap, but a cultural gap. The relationship between Midi and her mother is especially caustic and fraught with a lack of understanding. While Onodera's nisei mother speaks English fluently, her daughter cannot understand her lack of willingness to use words to defend herself against injustice. Onodera cannot reconcile herself to having a mother disinterested in fighting for her own rights: "I don't understand why she didn't fight back, stand up for her rights. I realize the time and the struggle are different, but that doesn't allow me to forgive her." Unable to relate to a non-political mother, Onodera imagines that she has gained her strength from her grandmother, and the figure of the grandmother, then, becomes not only the symbolic link to family ethnicity, and history, but a source of feminine strength:

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[111] In *Broken Entries*, the speech is written first in Japanese. This is just an excerpt from what was a slightly longer Japanese speech. The English appears second, in bracketed translation. Here is the Japanese translation of the portion quoted above: "Dare ka ga watashi no naka ni haiite, senbu keshite shimatta yoo desu. Hakujin no naka ni hairu tame ni, sansei-tachi wa jibun no ichiban chikai mono m ade nakushimashita – sore was nihongo desu. "Redress" no toki wa, issei no hitotachi ni nihongo de setsumei dekinakatta koto o zannen ni omoimashita" (R. Miki, *Broken Entries* 21).

> "I have never been angry with you, although part of me is still angry with mom. (...) I suppose that's why I always thought that I gained my strength through you. On the other hand, maybe I'm more like my mother than I care to admit."

The mother, like many nisei in the post-war years, reacted to the *evacuation* by becoming ultra-"Canadian." Onodera's mother pretended, for a long time, to be white, and denied her ethnicity in an attempt to assimilate. The same can be said of her daughter: "Like my mother I've denied my history for so long, pretending to be white." The mother took on the identity of the assimilated Other, attempting to be accepted by mainstream society. On the other hand, her daughter fought for her identity as a lesbian woman, with no regard for her ethnic identity. However, as the documentary is a circular narrative, framed by its own conclusions, the viewer knows that Onodera's process of learning about her grandmother has lead to a greater understanding of her mother's own view, once displaced by *evacuation*, and displaced from Midi's own reality, but grounded in the mother's experience, and therefore valid. This is much like Naomi's process of maturing in *Obasan*. Gail Fujita writes:

> Naomi perceives that she has acted like the Grand Inquisitor, obsessed with her own abandonment and forgetting to attend to the possibility of her mother's greater suffering. Recognition of her culpability as Mother's accuser is her supreme act, for only in the space created by self-denial, by a deliberate attendance, can Mother be restored. (39)

Suddenly, the desire to discover her grandmother's past, leads her to ask questions. Those questions are an inquiry into her grandmother's life that come with a judgement and accusation about her mother's choices in life. In the end, however, the answers to her questions bring her to the realization that, like Naomi who is also a sensei, she was judging her nisei mother's silences. The answers give her an avenue into dialoguing with her mother, and a medium that she has previously used to defend her sexuality – filmmaking – allows her to explore, preserve, and "stand up for" her ethnicity. Onodera as narrator says: "Because I had to fight for my sexuality, I ended up protecting my culture." This generational gap between Onodera and her nisei and issei mother and grandmother are made more obvious by the redress era and the associated political issues.

There is little understanding from the feisty third generation narrator who has fought to assert her lesbian identity both in the public sphere as a filmmaker, and in the private sphere, by refusing to marry: "I refuse to be someone I am not: A marriage simply to carry on the family" (Onodera in *The Displaced View*). During the *redress* *era* when she is making a film about the *evacuation*, and many other Japanese Canadians are embroiled in a battle for redress, Onodera cannot abide her mother's attitude of resignation about the historical and her mother's lack and her interest in fighting for her rights, both during her youth and in the film's contemporary. The film was released the same year as the redress movement climaxed: 1988. However, it is not only Onodera's mother who resigned to what happened. Her grandmother has no interesting in revisiting her past, either. The grandmother says: "もうあそこへは行ってみたいと思いません。今さびしくなっているでしょう。住んでる人も、もう多くはいないでしょう。もう誰のことも覚えていません。" Loosely translated, the grandmother is saying the following: "I don't want to go there anymore. It is probably deserted now. There will not be many residents. I don't remember anyone anymore." The grandmother references her loss of memory/memories throughout the film's narrative. While the mother wonders, "what would have happened, if we hadn't been evacuated," the daughter cannot fathom, her mother's acceptance of the past:

> I've heard you [mother] say that the evacuation was a good thing. *It made the Japanese assimilate more. It took them out of the ghetto.* Do you really believe that, or are you still trying to justify the pain?" [112]

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[112] A few examples of translation discrepancies are as follows: (1) "It made the Japanese assimilate more. It took them out of the ghetto," is not subtitled in Japanese. The subtitles and the dialogue are not always communicated in both languages. (2) When Onodera talks about picking dandelions with her grandmother the English narration is extensive. She says: "We used to harvest dandelion greens together. I don't think Mom approved. She didn't like them very much. She said they were bitter tasting. We mixed them with *shoyu* and ate them with our *gohan*. I never understood why she didn't approve of some of the things you did. We played games: Candyland, Go Fish, sometimes even Gin Rummy. Did I need to explain the rules in my pigeon English? Would you have understood me

Of course, the mother's reaction was a fairly typical reaction for the issei and older nisei.

Noteworthy, is that not only is there a generational gap between the issei, nisei, and sansei narrators in *The Displaced View*, Onodera's desire to use film as a medium through which to communicate with her grandmother is complicated by the fact that the subtitles (for which she still had to rely on a translator) are not always faithful to the English. Most notably, not everything in English is subtitled in Japanese. This is problematic, because the film is meant to be a communication with the grandmother, and certain information is inaccessible to her. There could be several reasons for this: (i) It may be an issue of translation, because the translations do not always appear to be professional, and the director's Japanese is apparently too minimal to double check the meanings. (ii) Onodera is now mediating what her grandmother hears, instead of leaving that task to her mother. As a translator, or mediator of culture, one wields specific power. The omissions could be construed as a way to present a specific reality to the grandmother. While the mother has always been the translator and the mediator between her daughter and mother, because she

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otherwise? I knew how to say hot and cold, count up to ten, and the names of some Japanese foods. I think our communication went beyond that. I knew what you meant by your expression, the tone of your voice, your eyes." The subtitles in Japanese communicate something slightly different. Instead of " I don't think Mom approved. She didn't like them very much" as Onodera says in English, the Japanese subtitles translate as "She doesn't like it." The Japanese subtitles also leave out certain pieces of information. The following sentence is omitted in the Japanese subtitles: "We mixed them with *Shoyu* and ate them with our *gohan*." The English names of the games are omitted in the Japanese subtitle of the following section: "Candyland, Go Fish, sometimes even Gin Rummy. A few years ago I decided to learn Japanese. I wanted to talk to you properly. I quit after two classes. Just because I look Japanese everyone expects you to know the language.

"How long have you been here? You have such good English."

"I can only speak English."

In Japanese the subtitles make no mention of the Japanese language classes. The Japanese subtitles say something like the following: "I tried to learn Japanese two or three years ago, because I wanted to talk in Japanese with you, but I only speak English."

did not teach her children Japanese, it is now the film, and the director's choices, that mediate what the grandmother hears.

Nevertheless, *The Displaced View* well represents the linguistic divide between the generations, as the purpose of the film is predominantly the desire of the sansei granddaughter filmmaker/writer Midi Onodera to communicate with her grandmother without the interpretation of her nisei mother. Onodera has long admired her grandmother's strength, and ability to survive hardship. The issei had a difficult time. Omatsu says that even in the Multicultural paradigm the ethnic Other is required to cut their attachments to the other nations of the globe, in order to become Canadian:

> Our parents, the nisei were willing to pay this price, and they strove ever harder to become a hundred and fifty per cent Canadian. They hoped in so doing to gain acceptance, to win the franchise, and to finally receive equal citizenship rights with whites. […] Growing up as adolescents in British Columbia, the nisei were also ashamed of their immigrant parents' weird ways, their pigeon English, and Mongolian, heavily lidded eyes. Yet even dressed in Canadian clothes and with their perfect hip talk, the nisei were nonetheless told by white adolescent ushers to sit in the Oriental sections of the Vancouver movie theatres. They were cut to the quick by the sharp knives of racism. Today, all bear flesh wounds where their yellow skin was slit by the cold steel. (94-5)

The film is dedicated to a cross-cultural communication. The dedication at the beginning from the sansei granddaughter and director, to the issei grandmother, reads: "For My Grandmother, Sumo Yamazaki." On a personal level, the film is an explicit desire to communicate with the filmmaker's grandmother. Onodera says that she would like to be able to speak to her grandmother without speaking through her mother. The concluding scene of the film also speaks directly to the grandmother. In the final moments of the film, Midi tells her grandmother what she has taught her, and through the film and its subtitles, her message to her grandmother is communicated without having the mediator of Midi's mother:

> Through you I've gained the strength to be who I am, and somewhere along the line I've discovered my own, as well. In order for a person to grow, they say that you must confront your worst fear. In some ways mine hasn't changed since childhood. I'm still afraid of losing you and I will always regret not being able to tell you what you mean to me. I met an old man who said "too much Japanese stuff. That's over." I remember my mom saying just because you're Japanese that doesn't mean you are different from any one else. She said that for quite some time. If that were true, why did she have to keep reminding me? That wish I have, of you living forever. I know it'll come true. If your memory fails and you don't remember who I am, I'll remember, for the both of us, and when you die, we'll remember. (*Displaced View*)

The film itself eternalizes the grandmother. It captures her on film, and it communicates her story, in her own words, and in her own language, without the medium of translation. On a political level, the film's construction is also blatant distances the non-Japanese speaking viewer, because there are no English subtitles provided when the grandmother speaks in Japanese, and yet the English language is translated into Japanese.

Furthermore, the film allows the grandmother to express herself, which is a very political statement. This is in direct opposition to earlier representation of Japanese Canadians by the dominant discourse, where the white-male narrator speaks on behalf of Japanese Canadians. For example, in the earlier propaganda film, the "relocation centres" are contextualized by the biased narrator who also imposes sentiments and attitudes on Japanese Canadians who smile for the cameras. Even in Pierre Berton's "Exodus of the Japanese" the comments by Japanese Canadians are framed by the larger politically-biased narrative. Most notably, Mrs. Horiouchi, someone very comparable to Onodera's issei grandmother, never speaks for herself in the NFB film *Enemy Alien*. Instead she is narrated by the voice-over narration of Stanley Jackson, a white man from the dominant discourse (see Chapter Two).

Through the medium of film, Onodera is not only communicating with her grandmother and re-establishing a link to her, the director is also preserving her grandmother for posterity, and in doing so, preserving the cultural heritage of the family: their "Japaneseness."[113] Grandmothers, and the role of the matriarch as a link to cultural heritage, becomes a trope in Japanese Canadian family documentaries (community autobiographies). Film becomes a medium to preserve the grandmother's, and thereby the family's cultural identity, that threatens to vanish with their passing.

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[113] This is a refrain from Ohama's film, *Obāchan's Garden*

In *The Displaced View*, the mother – and the nisei generation that she represents – becomes the generation of rupture. They are the link between the issei and the sansei, both as linguistic translators, and translators of culture. At the same time, it is the fact that they neglect to teach their children the language and culture that causes the rupture. Of course, that is the outcome of the earlier ruptures: the immigration, the wartime *evacuation*, the post-war resettlement, etc. Nevertheless, the mother thinks that the younger (sansei) people do not understand the struggles of her generation or her mother's generation. The nisei mother thinks it is her parents' generation, the issei, who really suffered. The mother empathizes with the grandmother, and admires her resilience. Nevertheless, the sansei daughter feels misunderstood by her Japanese Canadian mother who straddles two cultures, and cannot adequately translate them to her daughter. The film does not come with a necessarily vocal mandate, despite the fact the narrator was inspired to ask questions of her grandmother. Like Naomi in *Obasan*, the sansei narrator of *The Displaced View* learns to understand the meaning of silence, and its relationship to vocality.

Obviously, *Obasan* is a fictional autobiography with a fictional narrator, as opposed to *The Displaced View* that is an experimental documentary and auto-biography/family biography. However, the novel and the film make use of many of the same devices in two different formats. Both texts are polyphonic, and draw on voices from a number of different registers and sources. Both texts use pictures and personal letters, and where Kogawa reproduced government documents and historical newspaper articles, Onodera inserts an historical CBC radio broadcast of Prime Minister Mackenzie King making an announcement after Pearl Harbour: "All Japanese nationals will ***in principle*** be treated in the same way as nationals of Germany and Italy. Those who are considered dangerous…" [emphasis added]. The radio announcement fades away, as the many exceptions that will qualify Japanese Canadians as a threat are explained. The experiences of the various characters in *Obasan* and the narrators in *The Displaced View* are very similar, and it is a fine line between where intertextuality ends and community autobiography begins. Both texts are the matrilineal narrative of the sansei characters' families: Naomi and Midi. Naomi was a sansei who lived through the *evacuation*, but not until the end of the novel did she understand what had happened to the various family members divided between Canada and Japan. The end of the novel reveals the story of her mother and maternal grandmother Kato, who were in Nagasaki at the time of the bombings. Onodera is uncovering the wartime experiences of her matrilineal family: her mother, and her grandmother, Suno Yamazaki, who lived through *evacuation*. Onodera's story is more focused on events in Canada, since she did not live through them, like the fictional sansei Naomi. Onodera shares some of Emily Kato's desire for redressed justice, and like Aunt Emily, she researches and fights to assert her rights to be Canadian/Japanese Canadian. Like Aunt Emily who planned a trip through the B.C. interior in 1962 with Uncle, Obasan, and Naomi, Onodera takes a trip to discover what is left of the internment camps in British Columbia, and the realizations and outcomes of the two narrators are much the same. They realize that there is little physical evidence remaining of what transpired in the 1940s. There is no physical space that denoted the site of the internment camps because nature had reclaimed the sties, so for the mainstream the nation bears no scars and the wounds have healed over. Meanwhile, it is an entirely different situation for Japanese Canadians who do not need a physical marker of the trauma for it to continue to exist as a wound in their psyche and lived reality. She goes to Sandon, Slocan City, and New Denver. Onodera's narrative is written on the palimpsest of *Obasan*; she says that she "couldn't find where the Lemon Creek or Popoff camps had been on any map," just as the Katos and Nakanes find no existence of their community ghosts:

> We looked for the evidence of our having been in Bayfarm, in Lemon Creek, in Popoff. Bayfarm and Popoff were farmlands in Slocan before the tar-paper huts sprang up. Lemon Creek was a camp seven miles away carved out of the wilderness. Tashme – formed from the names of Taylor, Shirras, and Mead, men on the B.C. Security Commission – also rose overnight, fourteen miles from Hope, and as quickly disappeared. Where on the map or on the road was there any sign? Not a mark was left. All our huts had been removed long before and the forest had returned to take over the clearings. What remained the same was the smell of pine and cedar. The mountains too were unchanged except for the evidence of new roads and a larger logging industry. (117-8)

The internment camps become, in some ways, mythical places, erased from the landscape, just like the *evacuation* had been erased from family histories for several decades after the war and before the redress period. The attitude towards re-membering is also very similar in the two texts. What *Obasan* has at its advantage is that the fictional characters can be used symbolically to represent the different generations and attitudes. Obasan is vocally reticent to an extreme, as only a fictional character can be. Her dialogue is limited to silences, and short explanations here and there: "Everyone someday dies" (11), "There was no knowing" (14). The issei grandmother in *The Displaced View*, however, can express herself, because she has the language – Japanese – through which to do so.

There is some academic criticism on *Obasan* that interprets speech as superior (an evolution) to silence. Silence is Obasan's language of grief, and the depth of her trauma – and the issei who constitute the synecdoche – that cannot be expressed verbally. Where Naomi, in *Obasan*, must move from speaker to listener (Zwicker 156),[114] Onodera must do the same. They are both narrating their family histories. Even if Onodera is only one of three narrators, she is also the director and writer of the documentary, so she still mediates the speech and contextualization of the mother and grandmother's contributions. In the film, Onodera wants to move away from imagining/imposing a narrative, and being the Grand Inquisitor. Each generation approaches, or in Midi's case reproaches, the internment from a different perspective, a displaced view. What is significant, however, is that in this narrative, three different generations of Japanese Canadian women are able to speak for themselves, unlike other films on similar topics written, and produced by the mainstream media.[115]

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[114] "Although Naomi's memory and retelling of the past constitute a vital process through which Naomi gains some measure of healing, that process is finally insufficient without its corollary, listening. The challenge Naomi faces is how to interpret her mother's silence. . . . In order to hear her mother, Naomi has to break the paradigm of traditional psychotherapy, moving from the position of speaker to the position of listener" (Zwicker 156).

Onodera's film emphasizes the necessity for intergeneration complicity that starts with the sansei narrator's deepened understanding (if not forgiveness) for her mother's choices and world views. The film, as stated at the outset, is created due to a desire to uncover the answers to questions that until the making of this film had not been asked: "Why didn't you fight? Do you really believe that [the internment was for the best], or are you still trying to justify the pain? Why haven't these people left, and why do so many return? Ghost towns and war time memories." The mother and grandmother are disinterested in dwelling on the events of the past, and have remained silent until Onodera asked the questions. Like in *Obasan*, where Naomi attempts to negotiate the silence of Obasan and the issei, and the vocality of Aunt Emily and the nisei, "the avenues of silence do coincide with the avenues of speech" (Cheung, "Attentive" 125), when the letters long kept secret are spoken, and listened to. Nakayama-sensei says to Naomi and Stephen, "your mother is speaking. Listen carefully to her voice" (Kogawa 233). What the Grand Inquisitor[116] (who Naomi realizes is her doubting self who has accusingly questioned her mother) learns is that demanding to know is also a refusal to listen:

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[115] Mainstream media includes television and film. *Obasan* does not speak, and she is found in a Japanese Canadian authored text. However, cross-genre comparisons are complicated because Obasan is a fictional character and a literary device. Her silence is a symbolic articulation of her trauma, representative of the fact that the issei preferred not to discuss the *evacuation*: shikata ga nai. As a synecdoche for the first generation, her silence contrasts with the vocality of Emily Kato, a nisei.

[116] Cheung explains the significance of the Grand Inquisitor in "Attentive Silence":

> The most instructive dream – one that alludes to the "grand Inquisitor" in Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazaov* – occurs just before Naomi finally learns about her mother's ordeal in Nagasaki. In her dream the Grand Inquisitor (who resembles Old Man Gower) is prying open her eyes and her mother's mouth. (125)

> His [the Grand Inquisitor's] demand to know was both a judgement and a refusal to hear. The more he questioned her [Mother], the more he was her accuser and murderer. The more he killed her, the deeper her silence became. What the Grand Inquisitor has never learned is that the avenues of speech are the avenues of silence. To hear my [Naomi's] mother, to attend to her speech, to attend the sound of sound of the stone, he must first become silent. Only when he enters her [mother's] abandonment will he be released from his own. (Kogawa 228)

In "Attentive Silences" Cheung argues that vocality and speech are not in contradiction within the context of *Obasan*'s narrative:

> Toward the end of the novel, silence and speech are increasingly imagined as complementary rather than antithetical, as in Naomi's inspection of the two Japanese ideographs for the word *love*: "The first contained the root word 'heart' and 'hand' and 'action' – love as hands and heart in action together. The other ideograph, for 'passionate love,' was formed of 'heart,' 'to tell,' and 'a long thread.'" Love may take the form of Obasan's serving hands or Emily's (and Grandma's) passionate telling: "the heart declaring a long thread knotted to Obasan's twine, knotted to Aunt Emily's package." The novel itself unwinds as a long thread that ties the variously strong women together. (127)

Similarly, the narrative thread of *The Displaced View* and the creative act of making the film causes questions to be asked and answered, which not only binds the three narrators together, but opens the avenues of communication and intensifies the relationships.

At the outset of the film, there exists a distance between the grandmother and the granddaughter, because they do not share a genealogy – a mother tongue. Therefore, the passage of genealogy is lost. The sansei narrator's inability to understand and communicate with her grandmother is not narrated, but experienced by the viewer, because as writer/director Onodera alienates the viewer by choosing not to translate the grandmother's Japanese dialogue. Instead, the English speech is subtitled, because the Japanese-speaking issei grandmother is the target audience. The grandmother speaks virtually no English and Midi speaks virtually no Japanese. She tried taking a course, but quit after two classes, because everyone in the class expected her to speak Japanese already, not English: "How long have you been here? Your English is excellent."[117] Therefore, the film becomes a medium to "speak" to her grandmother, and to record her grandmother's world view expressed in her own words.

The Displaced View in the Context of Earlier and Later Films

Suno Yamazaki, the grandmother, has the unusual opportunity to speak for herself in this Japanese Canadian film, unlike the appropriation of issei stories by the dominant discourse. In -- *of Japanese Descent*, no Japanese Canadians speaks for themselves. The images of Japanese Canadians living and working in internment and road camps are framed by the male voice-over. In Pierre Berton's "Exodus of the Japanese," some of the English writings of Mrs. Tanaka are incorporated into the narrative.[118] In Berton's episode on Japanese Canadians Harry Nobuoka, who is not identified as an issei or a nisei, shares a common attitude with Onodera's nisei mother. Berton narrates that while Nobuoka was angry at the treatment he received during the war, he later came to believe that the government actions had been positive, in that they had helped Japanese Canadians assimilate: "He felt that the Canadian government had inadvertently helped young Japanese Canadians by forcing them out of British Columbia, where they had no future, and into industrial areas where they could get good jobs and higher education" (Patton 43). The attitudes of shikata ga nai (resignation) and the notion that *evacuation* helped Japanese Canadians escape the ghettos, which is shared by the nisei mother in this film, had often been recuperated by the dominant discourses in the official narrations of *evacuation*. In contrast, Onodera questions her mother's and grandmother's narration of events. As the sansei narrator, she asks her mother whether she really believes the *evacuation* was good, because it got them out of the ghettos, or whether she is simply "trying to justify the pain." When her grandmother claims that she has no regrets, Onodera says "that is now, but what about then. How did you feel at the time?" In addition to questioning whether these attitudes were adopted as a coping mechanism or whether they reflect strongly held views, Onodera records her mother's own doubts and questions about what might have been: "Sometimes I wonder what might have been if we hadn't been interned…," and as a mother she wonders if maybe she ought not to have taught her daughter more Japanese things. When issei and nisei have complicated reactions to internment, such as post-war settlement in the location of the internment camps, Onodera questions those behaviours, but she does not provide simplistic answers that recuperate that experience into a narrative of economic success, as the official narratives had habitually done. She asks: "Why haven't these people left, and why do so many return? Ghost towns and war time memories." This final question evokes the narrative of *Enemy Alien*, which minimizes the severity of internment with the implication that the site of internment was very beautiful and Mrs. Horiouchi has therefore lived out her life in the space of internment.

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[117] The Japanese subtitles make no mention of the Japanese language classes. They only translate the following: (paraphrase) I tried to learn Japanese two or three years ago, because I wanted to talk in Japanese with you, but I only speak English.

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[118] Because the original television version of Pierre Berton's "Exodus of the Japanese" is held by the National Archives in Ottawa, and no other copies are available, the book published by Janice Patton, with an introduction by Pierre Berton is the primary source. That source does not make it clear whether Mrs. Tanaka's writings were originally in English or in Japanese. In the book, the nisei George Tanaka is interviewed. It is possible that he provided Berton with his mother's writings. Whether she read them, or Pierre Berton read them, or a voice-over read them is unclear. The narrative merely states the following: "The most moving description of how those families felt was written by George Tanaka's mother" (Patton 23), and then her writings are incorporated into Berton's narrative.

In *Enemy Alien*, Mrs. Horiouchi's continuous displacement is used to imply that since Mrs. Horiouchi resides in the location of the internment, and has claimed the space of displacement as her own, that the internment was somehow less traumatic. However, as I have argued, to be displaced twice, first from the coast, second from the camps, and to then return to the location of the second displacement does not signify that one has come to terms with the original displacement. To live voluntarily in a camp and to be interned are potentially synonymous, if Mrs. Horiouchi is the prisoner of her own history, living out her life in the place of trauma. *The Displaced View (*1988), unlike in *Enemy Alien* (1975) and other narratives of the dominant discourse, does not assimilate the easily acceptable views of Japanese Canadian issei and nisei that absolve the historical government and contemporary society from the transgressions of justice that went on during the Second World War. Instead, Onodera, like Kogawa, contextualizes those attitudes, questions whether these "views" are coping mechanisms, and positions her own views in contrast to those held by her mother and grandmother, while still creating a permissive space for the various generations to express their differing views. The narrators of *The Displaced View* have a voice, and they are not merely the objects of anthropological investigations by white Canadian men.

Also in contrast to earlier narratives produced by the dominant discourse, *The Displaced View* rejects the notion of any metanarrative, and exposes the fallibility of its own narrative construct. As a recognition of the role cultural narratives (literary and cinematic) play in identity formation, this film – like Kogawa's *Obasan*, and the later docu-drama *Obāchan's Garden* (2001) by Ohama – fills in the missing historical information by imagining history in the absences created by issei and nisei silence. The film is a medium for Onodera to communicate with the grandmother that she has never been able to converse with. Onodera has long imagined her grandmother's life and has filled in the nuances of their communication and their relationship in a way that substituted for all the failings of her relationship with her mother. The film becomes both a medium to eternalize the grandmother and to communicate with her; also, the film allows Onodera to acknowledge her own ethnicity, the significance of which she had been denying to that point in her life. Onodera's narratorial voice-over states: "Like my mother, I've denied my history for so long, pretending to be white. *The Displaced View*, similar to Ohama's *Obāchan's Garden*, is honest about the fact that the narrator/director has imagined her grandmother and created a myth. *The*

Displaced View thereby entangles the grandmother's story with the Japanese fairytale, revealing the ways in which the narrator as a child (and perhaps even as an adult) has fantasized the missing facts about her grandmother's life. Onodera, as narrator, confesses feelings similar to those expressed by the great-granddaughter in Ohama's 2001 film[119]. In Ohama's docu-drama the yonsei great-grandchild imagines that the family has descended from the imperial palace, and that she might find out that she is a princess, once Obāchan's secrets are revealed. Where there has been no story, they have fantasized a matriarchal figure, which creates a family history. It is, in fact, the agenda of both films to create a family history: not to record the family history for posterity, but to create one in absentia.

In *Obasan*, the child narrator of Naomi incorporates fairytales as a mechanism to interpret and comprehend the world, and the power dynamics that leave her at the mercy of Mr. Gower and the state. In Chapter Eleven, just after Mr. Gower has molested her in the bathroom, Naomi becomes Snow White and Mr. Gower is the forest:

> "Run away little girl. Hide. Hide," he says, putting me down in the bathroom. I am Snow White in the forest, unable to run. He is the forest full of eyes and arms. He is the tree root that trips Snow White. He is the lightning flashing through the sky. (64)

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[119] This also happens in Kerri Sakamoto and Rea Tajiri's *The Strawberry Fields* (1997). Luke, Irene's boyfriend, does not want to find his real parents. Instead, he prefers the fantasy that he has created of his parents, by relying on media images and stereotypes. Irene criticizes him for his inability to face his own past. She says: "You can't face the truth. You cut out pictures from the magazines and pretend they are real" (*The Strawberry Fields*). Luke is an orphan who parodies his past; through this character the film criticizes the mass media for defining the ethnic identities. He is cut off from history and his sense of place.

In Chapter Fifteen just after the family has arrived at the internment camp, Stephen becomes the fragmented character of Humpty Dumpty who is broken and can never be reassembled without showing the fissures of the traumatic fall from his position on the wall. Of course the fairytale character's fall is symbolic of the Japanese Canadian trauma of *evacuation*:

> Stephen is scowling as Obasan returns and offers him a rice ball. "Not that kind of food," he says. Stephen, half in and half out of his shell, is Humpty Dumpty – cracked and surly and unable to move.
>
> [...]Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall," she says to herself. "Humpty Dumpty had a great fall ..."
>
> Getting no response from Stephen I turn to my other toys – (115)

As Naomi adjusts to the internment, she relates herself to Goldilocks:

> In one of Stephen's books, there is a story of a child with long golden ringlets called Goldilocks who one day comes to a quaint house in the woods lived in by a family of bears. Clearly, we are that bear family in this strange house in the middle of the woods. I am Baby Bear, whose chair Goldilocks breaks, whose porridge Goldilocks eats, whose bed Goldilocks sleeps in. Or perhaps this is not true and I am really Goldilocks after all. In the morning, will I not find my way out of the forest and back to my room where the picture bird sings above my bed and the real bird sings in the read peach tree by my open bedroom window in Marpole. (126)

And of course, there is the reoccurring symbol of the chickens, which is associated with *Little Tales for Little Folk* and the story of "Chicken Little" (152). *Momotaro* is the story that Aunt Emily claims is also Canadian because it is their story and they are embedded members of the Canadian nation. Also, like Naomi and Stephen, *Momotaro* is raised by non-biological parents. In general, where Stephen's life is guided by the war stories and the propaganda of the newspapers, which reinforce his sense of worthlessness as a Japanese Canadian, Naomi's life is framed by the stories of "Little Orphan Annie, Mandrake the Magician, Moon Mullins, the Gumps, the Katzenjammer Kids, Myrtle with her black pigtails sticking out the sides of her widebrimmed hat. My [Naomi's] days are peopled with creatures of flesh and storybook and comic strip" (Kogawa 160). The different narratives that guide Stephen and Naomi's lives and their relationship to their ethno-cultural identity as Japanese Canadians and as Enemy Aliens is the text's self-reflexive commentary on the necessity for a Japanese Canadian narrative of *evacuation* for Japanese Canadians who also need narratives by which to process the traumas of the wartime events. This is so much the case that where there exists no narrative to make sense of history, fairytales and fictions become part of the re-membering.

In *The Displaced View*, Onodera tells her grandmother that because she did not know her grandparents' story, she invented one for them. Of course, the childhood version of history that she created was a modification of the fairytale *The Crane Wife*. Onodera imagines her grandmother to be the wife of the benevolent woodcutter. She says:

> There is still so much I don't know about you, my grandmother: Bāchan. Information guarded from me, simply because I never asked. I didn't need to. A Japanese fairytale. You became the old woman living in a small village with Jiichan: the childless couple. Jiichan was the one who freed the snow crane from the trap. For his act of kindness, you were rewarded with a visit from a young girl. You gave her food and shelter, and in return she wove beautiful fabric of exquisite design. Then one day, her secret was discovered. But, I made up that past for you.

This film identifies the necessity for family and community narratives that are sometimes built solely on imagined realities. She also realizes, through the course of the film, that much of what she wanted to know was there to find out, had she ever asked the right questions. The answers were under the surface, but were lost in transmission, because the generations did not share a common language or cultural view. In an attempt to recapture history and the essence of one of her grandmother's defining moments, the *evacuation*,[120] Onodera goes on a geographical exploration of the B.C. interior, trying to locate the sites of internment. However, in so doing, the sansei narrator is replacing her childhood fantasies about her grandmother's biography, with her grandmother's own telling of events. Still, the new version cannot be replaced by a tangible version, verifiable by places and facts. It too relies on the grandmother's failing memories and interpretations of her own history. When Onodera goes in search of the old internment camps scattered across B.C., they were not marked by the maps, and she did not know what she would find:

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[120] The other defining moment addressed in the documentary is her arrival in Canada as a picture bride. Where the defining moment of the nisei generation was the evacuation, and the sansei moment was redress, the issei also experiences the crucial liminal moment of immigration (the women usually arriving as picture brides), and in some cases the issei lived through all three of these events. *The Displaced View*, like Ohama's *Obāchan's Garden*, highlights Suno Yamazaki's (Onodera's grandmother) arrival in Canada as a picture bride. The issei experienced multiple displacements: immigration, *evacuation*, and resettlement after the war.

> Everyone told me not to be disappointed, but I didn't need the physical evidence to validate history. I wanted to find the part of you [my grandmother] that I imagined in myself, the part of you that my mother had denied me, but I was almost afraid of what I might discover. (*The Displaced View*)

The grandmother's lived experience is potentially less impressive than the fairytale the narrator has lived with for her entire life, but by replacing the fairytale with the bits of information that she gleans about her grandmother's past, she is able to create a new, more nuanced, history. Between the various generational views of the grandmother, mother, and daughter, supplemented by family pictures and historical documents, exists the story of the *evacuation*: floating in the liminal space between the images that remain, the places that remain, the people that remain, and their varying points of view on what happened during and after the war. Some facts have been lost or are too difficult to recall. However, it is not the story of the facts of the *evacuation* that are solely important to the creation of a Japanese Canadian narrative but the creation of a nuanced story of survival – often a traumatic and scarred survival – to represent better a reality more complex than smiling beet farmers,[121] or a

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[121] Here the reference is to Kogawa's criticism of the mainstream media in her novel *Obasan*. At one moment Naomi Nakane, the story's narrator, finds an archival 1945 newspaper article that misrepresents Japanese Canadian post-war reality. The newspaper is described as having a photograph of one Japanese Canadian family relocated after the internment to a beet farm near Lethbridge. The family in the photo, all smiles, is standing around a pile of beets. The caption reads as follows:

> "Grinning and Happy". . . . Facts about evacuees in Alberta? The fact is that I [Naomi Nakani] never got used to it and I cannot, I cannot bear the memory. There

Japanese Canadian dentist in Montreal.[122] The "truth" in this narrative, is that any metanarrative is not possible. The frame stories in the narrative are closed, but the search for the family history is identified at the outset of the narrative to be a work in progress. The eye of the Daruma doll is painted in the closing scene, symbolizing that Onodera's dream to communicate with her grandmother has come true. Furthermore, she has created a family myth: "That wish I have, of you living forever. I know it'll come true. If your memory fails and you don't remember who I am, I'll remember, for the both of us, and when you die, we'll remember." However, that mythopoeia is dynamic, subject to change, metamorphosis, and it is not only the narration of the wartime situation. It is also the narration of the issei generation's arrival in Canada. The grandmother in the story arrived as a picture bride, and the grandfather decided to settle in Canada because he wanted to live in a Christian country. Those aspects of a nuanced heterogeneous Japanese Canadian narrative are as important as the narration of wartime injustices. Furthermore, stagnation in the historical moment of *evacuation*, does not allow the Japanese Canadian narrative and identity to be fluid, since it will fossilize in history. Therefore, the narration of discovering the family history becomes another important phase in the Japanese Canadian narrative, just as the narration of how the individuals, families, and community dealt with the injustices in the post-war era. To historicize ethnicity at the moment of victimization is to

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> are some nightmares from which there is no waking, only deeper and deeper sleep. (193-4)

The newspaper article itself recuperates the Japanese Canadian population within the post-war paradigm of happy contributors to the Canadian economy:

> "They played an important part in producing our all-time record crop of 363,000 tons of beet in 1945," he [Phil Baker, president of the Alberta Sugar Beet Growers' Association] added. (193)

[122] The reference is to a specific NFB short film, *Canada Vignettes: The Dentist* produced as part of the *Canada Vignettes* series. In this film, a Japanese Canadian dentist living in Montreal proudly discusses his successful assimilation in the post-war years, along with the integration of his children.

recuperate it into the mainstream narratives of *Enemy Alien* and Other. Like *Obasan* and the later *Obāchan's Garden*, *The Displaced View* tells the story of *evacuation*, but perhaps more importantly the story of the uncovering and the discovery of history, in contrast to many narratives from the dominant discourse that focus on the moment of *evacuation*, thereby containing Japanese Canadian history, in a way that does not do justice to the effects suffered during the post-war decades.

Furthermore, *The Displaced View* is an open-ended story that will continue to evolve. Now that greater understanding has been established between the mother and daughter, there is room for that relationship to grow. Onodera's relationship with her mother is not resolved, but she has come to realize that she is more like her mother than she cares to admit. She has denied her history. However, the narrative implies that with time Onodera will be able to discover more about her mother, if she asks the right questions. This is in contrast to the metanarratives that evaluate Japanese Canadians according to a protestant work ethic that values economic productivity. In general, these metanarratives claim that Japanese Canadians have recovered from the wartime injustices and the ramifications of those events, based on the economic recovery of Japanese Canadians after the war, and their continued economic productivity. These narratives fail to capture the complex consequences of *evacuation* during the war and in the ensuing decades. Some of the metanarratives of the *evacuation* were created in the *post-redress* era by Japanese Canadians who were funded by redress money, when writers and directors are willingly and/or unknowingly recuperated by Multicultural constructions, and consequently fail to address the political results of such processes through their own family biographies.

It's difficult to get your facts straight.

Even in one family, everyone has a different story.

Shikata ga nai. Shikata ga nai.

There are questions that remain unasked. (*The Displaced View*)

CHAPTER FOUR

Multicultural Recuperations

a) Echoes of Recuperation

Films that acquired noteworthy circulation and visibility during the 1970s were those produced by the mainstream media, which was often affiliated with the state: Pierre Berton and the NFB, for example. In the 1980s, Japanese Canadian voices begin to assert themselves in some important and formative ways, in relationship to the discourse of redress: Onodera is an example of an early Japanese Canadian filmmaker of importance. Then, during the 1990s a plethora of films were made by both the dominant discourse and Japanese Canadians. These films were funded by a number of organizations, including the Canada Council for the Arts, and organizations funded by the redress settlement of 1988. Despite the postmodern rhetoric that all narratives are equal, not all cinematic productions are. The distribution of funding and the allocation of awards is problematic in so far as relations of power enter into this frame that necessarily maintains the status quo of the dominant discourse, and therefore ends up allocating minimal funding to those artists that might potentially subvert the dominant social-political-cultural framework. *The War Between Us* becomes exemplary of this process. However, there are many poorly funded films produced in the 1990s, which confirm that the purpose of Multiculturalism is not to allow for a diversity of innovative voices, but to maintain the cultural icons of the dominant discourse while keeping non-dominant voices preoccupied with work that will neither be of excellent quality (artistic or technical) or have a great impact on cultural formations because of the limited visibility of these cinematic texts.

The Polynesian word *taboo*, as defined by Freud means two contradictory things:

> it means, on the one hand, ‘sacred’, ‘consecrated’, and on the other ‘uncanny’, ‘dangerous’, ‘forbidden’, ‘unclean’. The converse of ‘taboo’ in Polynesian is *noa*, which means ‘common’ or ‘generally accessible’.
>
> Anyone who has violated a taboo becomes taboo himself because he possesses the dangerous quality of tempting others to follow his example: why should he be allowed to do what is forbidden to others? Thus he is truly contagious in that every example encourages imitation, and for that reason he himself must be shunned. But a person who has not violated any taboo may yet be permanently or temporarily taboo because he is in a state which possesses the quality of arousing forbidden desires in others and of awakening a conflict of ambivalence in them. (86-86)

Thus, the Japanese Canadian who speaks about the taboo of internment becomes himself taboo. However, in not speaking about it (thus being a model minority citizen) she or he also exists in a permanent state of taboo because they are then in a position of envy, awakening forbidden desires in other ethno-cultural groups. Taboo then becomes a tool of recuperation. Japanese Canadians seem to struggle against a sense of taboo in the same way that they struggle against recuperation. To be a model citizen means that their position as an ethno-cultural group is in jeopardy, just as their status as *enemy, fifth-columnist, subversive, non-Canadian,* is a recuperation of the community by the dominant (minority) discourse, that maintains its power and defines its identity according to what it is not: in this case Japanese Canadian. In his 1998 publication *Broken Entries,* R. Miki speaks about the relationship of the post-war (50s–mid 70s) Japanese Canadian community to *evacuation* and the motivations for the redress campaign:

> The touchstone of community had slipped out from under, so no framework existed for reproducing, even identifying in meaningful self-critical patterns, a shared history. Instead, the weakening of community-based values often led to self-denial, self-effacement, passivity, and a fear of politics, qualities that aided in the stereotype of Japanese Canadians as the "model minority." Hardly the position out of which vital writing could arise. Before that could happen, a reclamation process had to occur. (112)

The problem, as I see it, is this: R. Miki viewed the redress campaign as the necessary *reclamation process*. The redress campaign created an identity that situated itself around the victimization of Japanese Canadians in an unjust Canadian society that had discriminated against their "Japanese race" and "Japanese ancestry". The redress campaign positioned Japanese Canadians in conflict with the dominant discourse – just as they had been when they were Enemy Alien – by voicing the injustices of the past. The ultimate goal was to achieve redress – the political recognition of injustice that came with an apology, both verbal and monetary.

However, the irony is that once redress was achieved, Japanese Canadians were back where they had been in the three decades following the war: they were now officially re-labelled (narrated by the dominant discourse as) model minority citizens. Japanese Canadian identities are constantly struggling to find their place in a Multicultural nation which places ~~them on one~~ or the other side of the binary system of Multiculturalism that only has two positions: included or excluded. Either way, Japanese Canadians are recuperated by the political powers that be, in order to maintain the rhetoric of Multicultural diversity. This is the taboo inherent in Multiculturalism. The Other defines who is included vis-à-vis who is not. *Inclusion*, just like *marginalization* or *exclusion*, comes with its own set of anxieties about invisibility. So, regardless of the stage, Japanese Canadians are constantly negotiating their identities in an attempt to escape the invisibility[123] of being recuperated. Japanese Canadians functioned within the system first as *excluded* (Enemy Alien, Yellow Peril), then as *included* model minority citizen, then as *excluded* (seeking redress – victim of injustice), then as *included* (redressed citizen – model minority citizen – especially with the influx of capital from Asia in the last two decades).

On September 22, 1988 Brian Mulroney, in the House of Commons said the following:

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[123] Invisible means that one is not seen as an individual who makes up part of the collective Japanese Canadian identity, but instead is seen only as one of the prototypes of Multiculturalism – Enemy Alien or model citizen – both of which are restrictive identities that maintain the status quo, whereby ethno-cultural groups can only become part of the mainstream through assimilation, and visible minorities within that group can never fully assimilate because of the semiotics of the body that place them outside the constructs of power.

> I know that I speak for members on all sides of the House today in offering to Japanese Canadians the formal and sincere apology of this Parliament for those past injustices against them, against their families, and against their heritage, and our solemn commitment and undertaking to Canadians of every origin that such violations will never again in this country be countenanced or repeated. (A. Miki 19)

With this apology came a monetary compensation in the millions. However, redress does not end the struggle for Japanese Canadian to be seen and heard. *Post-redress* was not the utopia that had been imagined by some. The redress settlement had caused a crisis in the Japanese Canadian narration of identity because the position of the marginalized that had officially been narrated as the Japanese Canadian identity was neutralized. Through official redress, Japanese Canadian internment was written into the dominant political history of the country, thus erasing the subversive or radical element of the discourse surrounding it. Redress neutralized the internment discourse of victimization and recuperated the Japanese Canadian identity to promote notions of equality for minority groups in a Multicultural society. Japanese Canadian internment, therefore, was recuperated as a part of dominant Canadian discourse about nation formation, which neutralizes any discourse of persistent racism. The result of redress was that the community was again in danger of losing control of its own identity narration, and worse still was the fact that the identity that they had helped narrate in the media surrounding redress was now obsolete. Since *redress* Japanese Canadians have been struggling against recuperation as model citizens because from that position they have no position "out of which a vital writing can arise." The "reclamation process that had to occur," according to R. Miki, before a vital literature could arise, is the same process that makes a vital literature hardly possible.

In the *post-redress* era, Japanese Canadians continued to write Japanese Canadian history into existence, and these histories established the early arrival of Japanese Canadians to the country, their role in creating the nation, their struggles in the face of discrimination and adversity, and their contemporary place in the nation as successful members of Canadian society. However, in the *post-redress* era the parameters of successful Canadian citizenship used in Japanese Canadian cinematic biographies and family/community autobiographies were often defined by state-Multicultural rhetoric, and for the most part they express none of the nuance of the earlier *redress* text, *The Displaced View.* In other words, as model citizens, Japanese Canadians risked inclusion into the Multicultural narration of the Canadian nation as culturally assimilated and economically viable participants in Canadian society: one being the product of the other, in an ironic chicken-or-the-egg scenario. While there had been some innovative filmmaking produced in the *post-redress* era by Japanese Canadian writers and directors, the majority of the Japanese Canadian documentaries and films succumbed (to varying degrees) to the agenda of the dominant discourse. In an effort to prove Canadian-ness, after having battled with the government during the *redress era*, many documentaries are emphatic about the loyalty and Canadian-ness of Japanese Canadians. However, it is as sansei narrator Onodera says, in *The Displaced View*: "I remember my mom saying just because you're Japanese that doesn't mean you are different from any one else. She said that for quite some time.

If that were true, why did she have to keep reminding me?" Nevertheless, in the Japanese Canadian narrative, *post-redress* risks becomes subsumed by state-Multicultural discourse that declares all possible, in the best of all possible worlds *à la Leibniz* This chapter looks at how the dominant discourse again takes control of the Japanese Canadian narrative of identity through production and funding, by recuperating both the internment narrative and Japanese Canadian artists (actors) and filmmakers. Despite all that, at the turn of the millennium, Ohama's *Obāchan's Garden* offers a new imaging and imagining of Japanese Canadian identity.

One of the ironies of the redress settlement is that while the Japanese Canadian community had been fighting against racism for the previous several decades, what was considered a victory in Parliament on September 22, 1988 led the community into the *post-redress era* where they found themselves unexpectedly trying to escape recuperation now that the redress settlement had validated them as model minority citizens. For more than a decade after r*e-dress* there is a multitude of (often) low budget documentaries and literary publications that tell a variety of Japanese Canadian family stories about their lives in Canada, for which the re-membering of family *evacuations* is the central focus. These productions and publications were funded by Canadian government institutions and redress funds. The themes of these texts range from complete family victimization, to victimization with a plea to be accepted as Canadian (look at the struggles that we have overcome), to victimization that ends in what is supposed to represent victory through the achievement of equal citizenship and redress for past-wrongs (which is often transparent in its construction); these texts are reminiscent of cinematic representations of the Japanese Canadian films from the dominant discourse.

In 1995, the CBC telefilm *The War Between Us* was directed by Anne Wheeler and written by Sharon Gibbon. This film is significant because it was chosen for funding over a screenplay written for *Obasan*, Kogawa's award winning novel. This film becomes a paradigmatic example of a Multicultural film. At the 1999 Proceedings for the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, a speaker from the audience identified as Ms. Platt, asserts the relevance of *The War Between Us:*

> I might just mention some of the movies that we have done over the licence period that reflect the multicultural realities of Canada: "The War Between Us", "Frost Fire", "Trial at Fortitude Bay", "Dance Me Outside", "Spirit Rider", "Big Bear" of course, "Planet of Junior Brown", "One Heart Broken Into Song" which goes to air this coming season, the two "North of 60" movies, "Revenge of the Land" which is coming this fall, and the big Christmas Movie "Must Be Santa" starring a black santa.

As part of a Multicultural broadcast agenda, *The War Between Us* does little to disrupt the status quo.

Anne Wheeler's film is a technically sound, well acted, well produced film that is enjoyable to watch, and it, furthermore, attempts to present some of the nuances of the internment, such as dual loyalties to Canada and Japan, discriminatory attitudes on the part of Japanese Canadians towards white Canadians, class issues, and intermarriage between Japanese Canadians and white-Canadians. However, its narrative clearly comes from the position of the dominant discourse for several reasons: First, it focuses specifically on the issue of internment, which is predominantly the case in dominant-discourse narrations of wartime injustice (and criticism of wartime texts) because the paradigm of internment is easy to contain and recuperate as an aberration. *The War Between Us* begins at the historical moment of Pearl Harbour and provides no background information about the anti-Japanese and anti-Asian sentiment that had been building for decades in British Columbia. The internment itself, thereby, becomes a liminal moment. Therefore, there is no clear link made between the economic benefits for white fishermen and businessmen if the Japanese Canadian competition were eliminated, and the desire to intern the Japanese Canadian population. Second, the film ends at the moment that Aya Kawashima and her parents are "repatriated" to Japan. However, that was not the end of the story from the perspective of Japanese Canadians. That only ends the story, as it was visible to, and affected the dominant discourse. Third, the film uses the Kawashima family to mediate the Japanese Canadian wartime experience, because they are an upper middle-class Japanese Canadian family that suffered serious economic setbacks because of the war. They are Vancouverites, who are much more sophisticated than the inhabitants of the small town community to which they are relegated during the war. Therefore, as more educated, financially successful citizens, the Kawashimas are palatable to the middle-class CBC viewers. Therefore, the issues for viewers become not those of human rights and injustice, but of financial devastation and social uprooting. Fourth, it is a linear narrative where the main white family who live across from the Kawashimas eventually overcome their racial prejudices: the father starts a business with two Japanese Canadian brothers, the mother becomes friends with Aya (who is nanny to their youngest daughter), and their eldest daughter and Aya's brother run off and elope. Jig (Peter), the war veteran and brother to Ed Parnam, remains staunchly anti-Asian, representing the faction of society that is not progressive and remains stuck in its old ways. However, his inability to adapt to changing social situations is also reflected in that he does not take part in the partnership that Ed establishes with the Endo brothers, and his wife gives up her partnership with Peg in the store that they opened. She chooses to marry and remain at home. Therefore, an inability to adapt to changing social dynamics (and overcome racism) fractures the family. Ann and Jig are not only ostracized, but their inflexibility impacts their ability to succeed economically and to rise from the working class to the middle class. The message then, is that middle-class Canadians, the target audience for the film, are progressive citizens able to accept a Multicultural Canadian society.

Overall, *The War Between Us* self-proclaimedly avoids dwelling on the injustices of war (because those cannot be as easily recuperated), choosing instead to focus on the social aspect of Multicultural success. The back jacket of the NFB VHS states:

> While not denying the wrongs done to innocent people during this part of Canada's history, the program does not dwell on personal hurts, focusing rather on how the situation brought people together.

Thus, within the paradigm of social transformation through "internment," the narrative implies that there were positive outcomes of the *evacuation:* it brought people together, so they were able to overcome any individual problematic through the reconstruction of a sense of a community, as is evinced by an acceptance of a liberal middle class society. Of course, relocation/*evacuation* is not a necessary ingredient for forming healthy social relationships. However, this is a similar naturalizing or rehabilitating logic to that expressed by *-- of Japanese Descent*, where the internment civilized the Japanese Canadian population. *The War Between Us* is more egalitarian than *-- of Japanese Descent*, in that it is a space to transform both Japanese Canadians and white Canadians, and help them overcome their prejudices towards one another. In fact, it is the white Canadians who learn from the experience of interacting with the racialized Other. The final message of the film, however, is like that of many documentary films of the 1990s, in that it glorifies the success of the Multicultural society. Ultimately the Parnams and the Kawashimas become not only friends, but family, with the marriage of the Mas Kawashima and Margaret. Therefore, the film perpetuates the myth that Canada becomes a Multicultural nation after the Second World War. In reality, Canada was a multicultural nation even before legislation. The Multiculturalism of the 1970s legislated into existence something that had long been part of the Canadian reality, and functionalized it, making it part of the political rhetoric of national identity. *The War Between Us* narrates successful Multiculturalism as intermarriage, where the inter-married family becomes symbolic of the larger Multicultural Canadian family, the nation. As a narrative produced and directed by the dominant discourse, albeit in co-operation with a large number of Japanese Canadian artists, actors, and filmmakers, it is perhaps not shocking that internment leads to a happy ending where society has undergone a dynamic transformation and racism is transformed into tolerance after the Second World War. The film presents a well-developed problematic of the dynamics of social and ethno-cultural relations in the 1980s-1990s, since it overcomes the facile polarization of "us" and "them," by using the category of hybridization as a mechanism by which to surmount sterile oppositional frames. However, the concern is the number of documentary films produced in the *post-redress* era that unquestioningly adopt the rhetoric of Multiculturalism whereby the Japanese Canadian citizen is unproblematically integrated into contemporary society, and injustice and racism become historical. The Murakami family story is one example of the Japanese Canadian narrative being amalgamated into the official agenda in the *post-redress* era; a second example is the body of work produced by Ohama, which clearly illustrates the impact that funding can have on an ethno-cultural artist's ability to be innovative. *Obāchan's Garden*, Ohama's last film, stands in positive contrast to the other films she made as part of an educational series with a Multicultural mandate.

b) The Murakami Family as Capitalized Narrative

There are two films about Kimiko Murakami. The first, *Mrs. Murakami – Family Album*, is produced by Yantra Walker in 1991 through Access Network (Calgary) and the second, *Kimiko Murakami: Triumph Over Internment* (2005), is part of the *Mother Tongue* series. The most obvious question is this: Why did Susan Poizner choose to retell the story of Kimiko Murakami, considering that it had already been memorialized in documentary film form in the 1990s? The answer to this question reveals the polemics of state-sponsored Multiculturalism and the politics of postcolonialism.

The narrative of the first film is framed by the narration of Kimiko Murakami's granddaughter Karen Bennett, but a significant portion of the narration is done by Kimiko, who tells her own story in interview style with Karen acting as an invisible interviewer. The filming takes place over a number of years starting as early as 1986, when the Kitagawa's were celebrating their sixtieth wedding anniversary. The grandfather passes away in the middle of the film's narrative, in March 16th, 1988 (only five months and six days before the redress settlement of September 1988). The film was not released until 1991. However, the making of the film was obviously part and parcel of the redress movement and the redress settlement. The film is predominantly funded by the Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation (whose funds would have come from the redress settlement), and the National Film Board of

Canada (which has an agenda to promote a Multicultural image for the country).[124] It is a film inspired by the politics of redress, and funded by the settlement. Its message is also one of strength and survival in the face of adversity, embodied by the matriarch of the family: Kimiko Murakami. These ideals are aligned with Multicultural politics, with the ethno-cultural citizens becoming loyal Canadians, helping to build the nation, in the face of adversity and hardship. The *post-redress* narrative is framed by the recuperation of the *evacuation* narrative, by the dominant discourse.

The narrative of the second film, *Kimiko Murakami: Triumph Over Internment* (2005), is framed by the narrative of Susan Poizner – writer, director, and producer of this version of the Kitagawa story – who goes out to interview Mary Kitagawa (Kimiko's daughter). Mary predominantly narrates her now-deceased mother's life. The mandate of "Mother Tongue: A Woman's History of Ethnic Canada" is, according to the official website, "a 13-part documentary series that explores women's history in ethnic Canada. Each episode tells the story of a notable woman in one of Canada's communities." The ethnicities explored in the series are listed on the website as Acadian, African Canadian, Algonquian/Eastern Woodlands, Chinese, Doukhobor, Finn, Italian, Japanese, Jewish, Muslim, Rwandan, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese[125]. The Murakami family story is listed under "Japanese." Since the entirety of the film addresses the long history of this Japanese Canadian family in Canada, it would thereby be more accurate to refer to them not as Japanese, but as Japanese Canadian. The duration of the family's history in Canada alone is significant reason to call them Japanese Canadian. Furthermore, the content of the film explores the Second-World-War government's inability to recognize them as Canadian, and since the film exposes that, it would have added credibility to the series if the website reflected greater insight into identity politics than did the implementation of the War Measures Act. The series website states that the "Japanese" film, *Kimiko Murakami: Triumph Over Internment*, was released in 2005, and was predominantly funded by Canadian Heritage,[126] SCN,[127] and Canadian Learning Television.[128] All of these organizations have mandates that include the promotion of cultural/Multicultural and community relations: seemingly excellent mandates. However, their mandates exist within the paradigm of Multiculturalism, and the messages of these educational mandates must, therefore, be viewed with a critical eye. What is it that Multiculturalism is teaching through film, if not a notoriously effective form of propaganda?

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[124] The official NFB website reads as follows: "The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) is a federal cultural agency within the portfolio of the Canadian Heritage Department. Initially known as the National Film Commission, it was created by an act of Parliament in 1939. Its mandate, as set forth in the National Film Act, 1950, is to produce and distribute and to promote the production and distribution of films designed to interpret Canada to Canadians and to other nations. The NFB's mandate has been revised several times over the years to take into account the changing audio/visual environment and financial and social situation. The 2002-2006 strategic plan set forth the NFB's original mandate with the following mission statement: The NFB's mandate is to produce and distribute distinctive, culturally diverse, challenging and relevant audiovisual works that provide Canada and the world with a unique Canadian perspective" (http://www.nfb.ca).

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[125] It is noteworthy that only African Canadian is listed with African as a designator for Canadian. All the other Canadian ethnicities are listed as nouns and not noun designators (adjectives) for Canadian. As such, all the other collectivities are not represented as Canadians. There is no recognition made that these are communities living in Canada, and are, therefore, hybrid communities that are marked both by the time of emigration/immigration, and by the many generations spent in Canada.

[126] The website for Canadian Heritage posts the government mandate as follows: "Canadian Heritage is responsible for national policies and programs that promote Canadian content, foster cultural participation, active citizenship and participation in Canada's civic life, and strengthen connections among Canadians" (http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/index_e.cfm).

[127] The website posts the following vision statement: "SCN will be the pre-eminent, Prairie and Northern storyteller that stimulates pride, optimism, and harmony: pimātsiwen. (Pimatsiwen (sic) is the Cree word for life in all of its harmony)" (http://www.scn.ca/about_scn/vision.php). That same webpage post the following mandate: "SCN is the regional, public broadcaster that delivers cultural, informational and educational programming and acts as an enabler for the regional film and television industry" (http://www.scn.ca/about_scn/vision.php).

[128] The website states the following: What is CLT? Canadian Learning Television. Canada's only national educational television specialty service, offers a unique blend of enlightening and entertaining programming designed to challenge and inform, enrich and educate. Many CLT programs are connected to credit courses at universities across Canada. Learn as you watch some of the best programming TV has to offer in the areas of Careers, Film and Media Studies, War and History, Science and Nature and more" (http://www.clt.ca/about.cfm).

Mrs. Murakami – Family Album [illegible] like many of the documentary narratives, a desire to preserve the picture of a disappearing family history, and to preserve images of the aging grandparents before they slip away. Like *Obasan* and *The Displaced View*, this particular narrative is also a matriarchal narrative that preserves the family his(her)story. In fact, Karen's narration introduces the film by identifying the four generations of her family in Canada, which would be five, if she mentioned her own children: "Issei: great grandfather Okano. Nisei: bāchan, Kimiko Okano Murakami. Sansei: That is my mother, Keiko Mary Murakami Kitagawa. Yonsei: Akiko Kitagawa Karren Bennett. That's me." However, Kimiko is introduced as the beginning of the matriarchal line. Not only is Kimiko the first member of the narrator's family to be born in Canada, but she was, in fact, the first Japanese Canadian born in Canada.

The story follows Kimiko's life starting with her birth, the seven years she spent in Japan getting an education, her return to Japan in 1925 (at the age of 21) to find a husband, to their return to Canada and Saltspring Island, the nine years they spent working their land, until the war started. Then the story follows the dislocation of the family: her husband, being a Japanese national, was sent to the Yellowhead road camps, and her father, who had worked his farm for fifty years, almost had a heart attack the night he got the letter.

In Walker's film, Kimiko's story is framed within the context of the entire Japanese Canadian story. Her history is directly linked to the history of the community, through the titles that provide factual information. While Kimiko is narrating the family story, the sound of a typewriter interjects, and the associated titles announce the economic losses suffered by Japanese Canadians, both through income lost as a result of incarceration and through the confiscation of property by the Custodian of Enemy Property. The narrative combines the tale of the personal and the communal. Kimiko says: "The government took everything from us. This was the most horrible thing that happen in my whole life," and the 'us' comes to represent the entire community. One title reads:

> LOST:
> INCOME. WAGES.
> REAL PROPERTY.
> BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.
> PERSONAL PROPERTY .
> FAMILY EFFECTS.

Another says:

> PRICE WATERHOUSE
> ESTIMATE OF
> JAPANESE CANADIAN
> ECONOMIC LOSSES:
> $433 MILLION

The incorporation of these facts is to educate the viewer about the losses suffered by Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, and the didactic tone of the documentary reflects the mandates of the film's two main sources of funding: the Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation, which was established to distribute redress funds, and the National Film Board of Canada.

Kimiko's personal narrative informs the viewer about the government's legislation in regard to expulsion from the coast, internment, the confiscation of property, and the diaspora of the community east of the Rockies or back to Japan. Kimiko tells the typical story of how the family was not allowed to return to the coast immediately, that they had a restaurant business, and they saved enough money over a period of seven years to go back to the West Coast. They returned in 1954, and sent their kids to university.

Karen Bennett explains that the Murakami family is rooted on Saltspring Island. The relationship to the land and to the rootedness of the family is reminiscent of Kogawa's *Obasan*, which emphasizes the relationship of the Japanese Canadian characters to the Canadian landscape. The need to deeply "ground" the belonging and to assert a natural relationship to the nation has a meaningful resonance with *Obasan*:

> I [Naomi] am clinging to my mother's leg, a flesh shaft that grows from the ground, a tree trunk of which I am an offshoot – a young branch attached by the right of flesh and blood. Where she is rooted, I am rooted. If she walks, I will walk. Her blood is whispering through

> my veins. The shaft of her leg is the shaft of my body and I am her thoughts. (64)

But when Old Man Gower – symbolic of Prime Minister Mackenzie King, the power of the state, and white-society – molests her, she becomes a parasite on her mother's body, and the secret of what has gone on with Gower separates her from her mother. Naomi is deracinated, and her "legs are sawn in half" (65). Very much in contrast to the rupture in *Obasan*, the second Murakami narrative twenty-four years after *Obasan*'s publication and in the *post-redress era*, claims that the family is rooted. Their roots are on Saltspring Island, because that is where they have worked the land, and where they have lived the most productive years of their lives. However, it is also their home, not because the family has lived there, but because the family has died there. Karen asks: "Obāchan, why did you come back to the island after this war?" Kimiko responds: "Jiichan like this island, and besides we have a cemetery up there. That is the main reason. My mother, father, sister, and my son. Jiichan. . . . Japanese are different. My son is there that is why." In the end, the attachment to the land has never disappeared. Kimiko admits that if she won a million dollars, she would buy back her land. The issue of personal property is also politicized through the narrative. The fact that the family is rooted in Canada, and specifically on the west coast, associates them with the Canadian landscape, and the documentary is not only a story of personal loss and recovery, but a political statement about the Murakamis as not only citizens, but as pioneers, and founding fathers/mothers of this nation.

Something of interest that *Mrs. Murakami – Family Album* does introduce is the idea of intermarriage. Although it is by no means the only film to do so, it is one of the earlier films to address, if only in passing, the fact that the younger generations are inter-marrying, and the loss of Japanese language and culture is assured, if there is no resistance against complete assimilation and possible invisibility through the erasure of the ethnic-signifier of physical appearance. The film introduces issues of inter-ethnic marriage by reference to Karen's husband, David, who is a member of a dominant minority group.[129] The roots of the family are grounded in the landscape of the nation, and through the love the family shares.

The film moves from interview style, to a video of the grandparents' sixtieth anniversary. The anniversary party demonstrates that her grandparents are an integral part of their community, made up predominantly of white Canadians. The message of the film comes through very clearly in this segment, filmed before redress was achieved. In the background chitchat at the party it is possible to hear people discuss how the Murakami's "land was sold for a dollar and acre . . . they got a hunk of their land back on their 60th anniversary (voice 1). That would make a nice letter to the editor (voice 2). That's right (voice 3), but who'd put their name on it?" (Speaker and the small group burst out laughing.) This framing device suggests the collective WASPish gaze of historical "misdemeanour."

Then, the film cuts to the speeches. An unidentified, but very official looking speaker – possibly a politician – acknowledges the Murakamis by passing along the well-wishes from prominent officials:

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[129] This term is borrowed from Kosta Gouliamos and William Anselmi's book *Elusive Margins*, which refers to English and French Canadians as dominant minorities, since these ethno-cultural groups do not classify themselves as ethnic, but rather, consider themselves as founding settlers.

> We are joined today with best wishes from other countries and from across Canada. The first of these from our own Premier, Bill Bennett, who extends on behalf of the people and government British Columbia, the sincere best wishes on the occasion of the diamond wedding anniversary. Our Prime Minister Brian Mulroney sends warmest congratulations from Ottawa. Her majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second sends this from London: (he reads the letter) I send you both my warm congratulations on your diamond wedding. (the narrator's voice interjects) There is one from John Turner. (the speaker continues to read) The anniversary which celebrates many years of marriage has a very special meaning. It is a tribute to a union that has known friendship mutual love and respect. Their many memories of a lifetime are treasures never to be forgotten .

As the speeches are being made, the film's visual narrative shifts to a scene of the Murakamis walking in their garden. The formal speeches which clearly took place on a different date are the aural backdrop to the shot, and these public acknowledgments hang in the air above them in the domestic sphere, just as the public shame of the *evacuation* has hung over them since the war. Just as they had been shamed half a century earlier, they are now being honoured by their country. The voice over speech says:

> The Murakamis have in some way touched each of us whether it be through their friendship, their personalities, their dedication, their hard

> work, by their example. We offer them both our appreciation and our respect as fellow citizens.

They are acknowledged as citizens and respected members of community. Despite the fact that the grandfather dies before the redress settlement is achieved, he has been honoured by his community and his country.

The thesis of the documentary film is summed up in the concluding statements of the narrator who points out her grandmother's ability to endure the injustices that had been dealt her. Kimiko becomes a symbol of the power of genealogy for her descendants. Her granddaughter says:

> My grandmother was dealt one of the roughest hands I can imagine, yet she had the strength to endure it all. She didn't let and she wouldn't let anything beat her. My grandmother will never forget what happened but she is not bitter against anyone. She taught me that it was very important to look at people's hearts as opposed to the colour of their skin. What I would really want for our children is that they be as strong as their grandmother. She beat all the odds.

Not only did she overcome injustice, but she did not hold any bitterness or prejudices against Others of any colour. The theme is that Mrs. Murakami beat all odds because she was strong and without resentment. This is a narrative very much in line with the message of Multiculturalism where the wrongs of the past are acknowledged but are now resolved, not because there has been any resolution, but because it is history, and what is more important than history itself, is the personal fortitude demonstrated by the grandmother's ability to survive and overcome.

The film is not particularly original in its narrative delineation of the events of Japanese Canadian history. Kirsten Emiko McAllister in her article "Narrating Japanese Canadians in and out of the Canadian nation: a critique of realist forms of representation," speaking specifically about *Minoru Memory of Exile*, a 1992 NFB produced by Michael Fukushima, points out that the narrative created for the purpose of redress was often linear, and created with specific intentions in mind:

> This discursive strategy functioned to underline their status as ``pioneer" Canadians. Successfully identifying Japanese Canadians as pioneers made the validity of branding them as ``enemy aliens" who were a ``threat to national security" questionable. Once this was established, the redress movement could then define the actions of the government as a violation of their civil and human rights. (McAllister 89)

This narrative is, therefore, an addition to the body of narrative work produced that educates and informs the Canadian public about the internment and the necessity for redress. At the same time it repeats numerous mainstream documentaries funded by the National Film Board and other Canadian institutions in terms of style and content; its message is filtered through the mandates of those Multiculturalism institutions, either with intent or because the directors have absorbed the recuperative narratives of the Multicultural Canadian paradigm of Otherness, wherein the dominant discourse is defined vis-à-vis the plurality of ethno-cultural groups that define the margins of society and power.

Mrs. Murakami – Family Album is part and parcel of a recuperation of the Japanese Canadian identity post-redress, and does nothing more to challenge the narrative of model minority citizen than did films produced in the 1970s. For example, the *Canada Vignettes*, five minute shorts, were usually aired on CBC during commercial breaks, which were meant to instruct the nation on its identity, and in some cases its Multicultural heritage. *Canada Vignettes: The Dentist* is a five minute short about a Japanese Canadian dentist living in Montreal who had been interned during the Second World War. The vignette eliminates the specifics of the situation, giving only a linear outline of the events, placing the dentist's family in Canada from 1917 onward. He was interned, and yet his success story, as a model minority recuperates his position into the Multicultural discourse of the nation. It also predicts one of the narrative refrains of the redress campaign: many during the redress campaign who would voice the fact that things might have been different, or better, had the *evacuation* not interrupted their education. However, *The Dentist* as a success story illustrates that if a man seizes the opportunities afforded him in Canada success is possibly irrespective of the internment. The dentist claims he is successful, because he was in the right place at the right time: an evening course on vocational guidance. Were it not for this opportunity, he claims that he was on the road to becoming a mechanic. The dentist has, therefore, benefited from the opportunities afforded him by the dominant discourse. This state-sponsored-Multicultural narrative recuperates both historical internment and contemporary racism: Notably, it skirts over issues of ethnic/racial prejudice, by explaining the dentist's reasons behind choosing to settle in Montreal:

> We chose Montreal because rumour circulating in those days was that Montreal, being French, had absolutely no discrimination against the Orientals. . . . I've never ran into prejudice the last thirty odd years I've been living in Quebec, other than to be sometimes mistaken for a Chinese. Mind you, they say: All Orientals look alike. My children do not consider themselves Japanese at all. I am very happy to know that they're [sic] absolutely no feelings like we have had of being discriminated against, and they're feel they're total Canadians at all times.

Not only has this ethno-cultural citizen been recuperated by the narrative, he has been so fully recuperated by the rhetoric of the dominant discourse that he subverts his own ethnic status as Japanese Canadian, referring to himself jokingly as interchangeable with any Oriental, and he denies the ethnicity of his own children, claiming they are fully assimilated, and totally Canadian.

Very little changes from 1978 to 1991, the release dates respectively for *Canada Vignettes: The Dentist*, and *Mrs. Murakami – Family Album*. Both films delineate their respective family's roots in the country, applaud a strong work ethic, recognize hardship, acknowledge internment, and proclaim post-internment/post-redress success, which is defined as varying degrees of assimilation with and acceptance by the dominant discourse. Therefore, the film *Mrs. Murakami* would have been of interest as only another film in the body of Japanese Canadian internment narratives that recount Japanese Canadian history as a linear story that place Japanese Canadians into the pioneer/founding fathers' narrative of the nation, that allows for a certain degree of recuperation as model minority – assimilated Other – except that it has been retold in 2005. Why does this family's narrative become the site of recuperation again, fourteen years after the original film is produced, and eighteen years after redress is achieved?

The second documentary *Kimiko Murakami: Triumph Over Internment*, is very formulaic. The tone is journalistic, since Susan Poizner frames the film as an investigative report. Driving her car along British Columbia roads, with vista scenes of B.C's beautiful landscape she frames Kimiko Murakami's story:

> Pristine rivers and fertile land drew thousands of European and Asian pioneers to the shores of British Columbia in the mid-eighteen hundreds. They came with little more than a dream of building a new life in this beautiful part of the new world. I'm Susan Poizner, and today I've come to the Frazier Valley region of BC to hear the story of a woman whose ancestors arrived here from Japan in 1896. Her name is Kimiko Murakami, and her daughter, Mary Kitagawa, will tell the tale.

The series mandate and the introductory phrases by the writer, producer, and director, Susan Poizner, frame and re-frame the story of the Murakami family in several ways that allow for a recuperation of their narrative. Like the first documentary made about the family, this film follows the family story of hardship during the Second World War, beginning and ending with an emphasis on the hard working lives they led both before and after that pivotal historical moment.

Poizner's framing devices are simplistic, and as formulas they are a contemporary reframing of ethnicity that repeat the patronizing sales pitch of Multiculturalism. The classic refrains are obvious: "They came with little more than a dream of building a new life in this beautiful part of the new world." Canada becomes the land of golden opportunity where great successes can be achieved – Gold Mountain – and the internment is narrated according to the aberration model.[130]

Susan Poizner as writer, director, and producer of the show has two clearly advertised mandates in mind: tropes which pervade the film, and underlie the creation of the entire Mother Tongue series. The title of the series posits the entire series as a revisiting of ethnic experience under the rubric of a *herstory*. The title of the film *Kimiko Murakami* clearly frames the history of anti-Japanese Canadian sentiment as the anomaly of the *evacuation*, which has been overcome. By historicizing the process of ethnic Othering, the film does not acknowledge the reverberations of ethnic prejudice perpetuated by Canadian Multiculturalism. Susan Poizner's professional website outlines the trajectory of her career:

> For over 15 years I lived and worked in the UK, Israel and Russia and I reported from countries including Austria, Turkey, Morocco, and Ukraine. When I returned to Canada in 2002 I decided to explore the exotic parts of my own country. So I've been traveling around Canada investigating the many historic and colourful ethnic communities that

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[130] In "After Obasan: Kogawa Criticism and its Futures" (2001), Guy Beauregard argues that internment should not be misconstrued as an aberration. Correctly, he argues: "Restrictions on immigration, the franchise, and the ability to enter or remain in certain professions are only the most obvious forms of state-directed anti-Japanese racism that shaped Canada and the subjectivities of Japanese Canadians from the late nineteenth century onward. An "aberration" model of racism in Canada disregards the accumulated weight of this history and the critical task of understanding its persistence" (3).

> thrive here and I've produced documentaries on the subject for the CBC and BBC radio.

Her reflections on ethno-cultural Canadian communities, as 'exotic' and 'colourful' are derogatory and demonstrate a lack of regard for the very communities whose stories she is writing, directing, producing. In other words, the filter through which these stories are made accessible to the Canadian public in 2005 – Susan Poizner – is a site that has absorbed colonial attitudes and practices. Where the first version of the Kimiko Murakami's life (1991) recorded history in the making, capturing the grandmother and grandfather while they were still alive, and placing their lives within the context of the internment and redress narratives, the second version of the family story, *Kimiko Murakami*, has no context. It could be done at any moment in time, purely for the exotic. Using trendy critical paradigms this film neutralizes the critical discourse around internment by recuperating the issues according to clichés. Between Multiculturalism and feminism Susan Poizner assimilates racism under the guise of human-rights politics that extinguish history from contemporary reality and repackage ethnicity. This film is the practice of the politics of aesthetics.

Poizner identifies the subjects of her films – ethno-cultural Canadians and their communities – as 'exotic' and 'colourful.' This attitude reflects the colonial attitude of Orientalism. Poizner uses terms associated with a passé historical discourse within the contemporary socio-political culturescape. In postcolonial times she maintains colonial vocabulary. After having traveled the world, she returns home and suddenly discovers that Canada is a microcosm of the global village. What she thought she had to leave Canada to discover – the exotic – is in fact contained within this nation. Now, in postcolonial times, when one is meant to be sensitive to the issues of ethno-cultural groups and allow for the dialogue and discourse of minorities, this director is again recuperating the discourse of the non-dominant discourse in a colonial fashion. Just as in a colonial paradigm, it is Susan Poizner, an outsider who views Mrs. Murakami as 'exotic' and 'colourful' who represents and reinterprets her story. Mrs. Murakami's story had already been produced by Yantra Walker and narrated by her granddaughter Karen Bennett, so the desire to reproduce and reinterpret it is motivated by an immediate economic gratification as a substitute for critical representation.

The Murakami family story becomes capital and is recognized for its capital value. *Mrs. Murakami – Family Album* had already narrated the family story as that of a powerful matriarchal line, which was already a trope in the film, which clearly outlines the strength of the grandmother, which the narrator hopes has been passed through the family to her female children. Therefore, the Murakami family story is available for easy recuperation as a commodity that will sell under the rubric of ethnic women's stories. As Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri point out in *Empire*, communication industries order the world and thereby control them:

> The political synthesis of social space is fixed in the space of communications. This is why communications industries have assumed such a central position. They not only organize production but also make its justification immanent. Power, as it produces, organizes; as it organizes, it speaks and expresses itself as authority. Language, as it communicates, produces commodities but moreover

> creates subjectivities, puts them in relation, and orders them. The communications industries integrate the imaginary and the symbolic within the biopolitical fabric, not merely putting them at the service of power but actually integrating them into its very functioning. (33)

In this way, the Murakami family story is a commodity that can produce economic profits, and political profits as a product of the power-relations established through the cinematic discourse.

Postcolonialism reintegrates differences in the dominating thought through the segmentation of the market. Postcolonial thinkers unwittingly legitimize the practices of capitalism as described by Hardt and Negri. Liberal capitalism looks at differentiation not as a homogenous system, but as heterogeneous; each ethnicity becomes marketable and a market. Postcolonial thinkers legitimize this capitalist practice.

c) Linda Ohama: Economy of Artistic Incongruencies

There has been some innovative artistic cultural product produced by Japanese Canadians. However, there has also been a lot more mediocrity produced, and interestingly mediocrity is readily available to the public. Mediocrity is the direct result of the funding that filmmakers receive. Ohama, the sansei artist and filmmaker, has a body of work that stands as a testament to the kind of influence certain funding and certain producers have over a filmmaker's ability to create innovative material. She has participated in projects that restrict her artistic vision and others that allow her more creative license and political freedom.

Ohama's film *Obāchan's Garden*, to my mind, is one of the more spectacular films produced on Japanese Canadian history, by either the dominant or non-dominant discourse. However, before Ohama produced, directed, and wrote *Obāchan's Garden* she had directed a number of less sophisticated narratives on Japanese Canadians: *The Last Harvest* (1992), *Watari Dori: A Bird of Passage* (1997), and *The Travelling Reverend* (2000).[131] All three of these films are available through the Vancouver distribution company Moving Images, and the latter two films are available either individually or through purchase for educational use as part of A Scattering of Seeds: the Creation of Canada series. All of these films perpetuate Multicultural discourse, despite the filmmaker's status as a sansei Japanese Canadian, and aside from the fact that they were produced by the same woman that would later produce the very innovative *Obāchan's Garden*.

The themes and motifs of *The Last Harvest* (1992), *Watari Dori: A Bird of Passage* (1997), and *The Travelling Reverend* (2000), revolve around the hardships that each of the protagonists have endured and overcome. The symbols of their success are to be found in the Canadian nationalistic discourse they embrace, they are all fiercely patriotic to Canada despite the discrimination and injustice they have endured, and their families are all assimilated into their communities. The first film, *The Last Harvest*, is an independent film, and it expresses greater nuance about the family's relationship to their vanishing Japanese culture. However, the focus of the story is Ohama's paternal family and their relationship to the land; they are farmers who are about to lose their land, because of the economics of agriculture. The story of the farms is intertwined with the story of wartime expulsion from B.C., because that was how they came to settle in Alberta. The family recollects how in the early years, when they were finally able to produce a crop, they were unable to sell it. Finally, one of their neighbours let them know that the white farmers had received letters from the government advising them that it was illegal to buy anything from the "Japanese." Finally, however, the farmers bought their crops at a reduced rate and sold them at market. There is only gratitude for the help their neighbours gave them, and no acknowledgment of the profit the white farmers would have made from the illegal transactions. The film reinforces the idea that the Ohama family is an integral part of the Rainier community. After this last harvest, only one of Ohama's cousins will continue farming in the area. He defines success (much like Voltaire's *Candide*) as something cultivated in one's backyard. Success is something personal, not something economic or political:

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[131] Note: She had also created artistic texts on issues that did not touch upon Japanese Canadian history and or *evacuation*, such as her 1997 film *Neighbours, Wild Horses & Cowboys* (54 min). Here, however, I am only dealing with texts related to the representation of Japanese Canadians.

> I think that success is measured more in how people have interrelated with other people, how they have raised their families and treated their neighbours. I think that everything about life in general can be learned on a small piece of land in the backyard garden. I believe that the attachment that farmers get to the land is seeing the creating and seeing the animals grow, and I think understanding and seeing his own place in it.

This farmer's place is very clear to him. It is where he lives, and where he works the land. Another theme that shows up in the Murakami family's story is that one's relationship to the land is determined by where one has buried their family (as opposed to their birthplace). One of the white Rainier farmers says that "when you start sharing a lot of things including a cemetery, you become pretty close friends, and you a learn that you all kinda fit a different culture. And it is not the Japanese culture, or a Scotch-Irish background that I come from. It is a culture that is developed in this area." Ohama emphasizes the role that her Japanese Canadian family has played in the cultural development of the Rainier community by highlighting that at the yearly harvest festival the women, dressed in kimono, perform a Japanese dance. This film establishes the Ohama family as part of the Alberta landscape and the Rainier culture/community. However, their time in that area is coming to an end, and with the loss of their land will come the loss of their relationship to that community. At the last harvest celebration, someone says of the farmers that, "We are just users, we are never owners. We will farm it for a number of years and pass it on to somebody else. So, we have to be the stewards. We will never be here forever. We will never own it forever. In fact, we probably never owned it." Ohama, as narrator, reiterates the ephemerality of the relationship to place. She says that "for 50 years my family have been stewards of the land. Now it's time to pass it on." The film ends on a melancholic note with tumbleweed rolling over the landscape and the family walking across a field, being led by a woman in a kimono who, ghostlike, is in both the opening and closing shots of the film, and appears and vanishes throughout the course of the narrative. The circular framing of the film, and the view of the family as transient stewards of the land, reflects a Buddhist attitude about life and adversity. However, it is also a narrative that is dangerously easy for the dominant discourse to recuperate under the rubric of ethno-cultural Other as transient in the white Canadian landscape (*à la* Margaret Atwood's interpretation in *Survival*).[132] Where the film is mundane in its typical post-*redress era* attitudes of success as defined by integration and assimilation, this first film hints at the filmmaker's more insightful interpretations of her family that come to fruition in *Obāchan's Garden*. She hints at an ephemeral presence that haunts the family despite their integration into Rainier culture. McAllister points out in her article "Narrating Japanese Canadians in and out of the Canadian nation" that Ohama uses techniques of realism, while simultaneously disrupting the clean linear narrative with non-realist motifs:

> While she [Ohama] uses a linear narrative to follow the development of the family's fortunes from their harsh beginnings to their successful farming business on the prairies, she diffuses the certainty of the narrative drive by the repeated use of intangible visual motifs. For example, she repeatedly uses a shot of her father sitting in a lawn chair wordlessly looking out across an empty wind-blown field; as well, an elusive kimono clad woman appears and disappears throughout the film. Both motifs suggest a presence that is at odds with the conventional documentary format which seeks tangible facts and concrete evidence. It suggests something that continues to haunt this

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[132] Atwood did not consider the voice of non-dominant Canadian citizen in her canonization of Canadian literature. Responding to criticism about her choice of authors, Atwood claimed that she excluded *all* immigrant authors because "it seems to me dangerous to talk about 'Canadian' patterns of sensibility in the work of people who entered and/or entered-and-left the country at a developmentally late stage of their lives" (Atwood qtd. in Reid). However, she did include Susanna Moodie, the British-born writer.

> family who present themselves as fully assimilated in their small prairie town. (McAllister 84-5)

There is also the unexplained Japanese doll, lying in disarray on the deck, in another shot. All of these shots provide nuance to what would otherwise be a linear documentary narrative. The phantom narrative that is not yet revealed to the viewer floats in and out of the family story.

Therefore, despite the film's failings as an overly simplified narrative of successful integration/assimilation based on the story of bank-foreclosure that is displacing them from the home they established after the original displacement from B.C. during the Second World War, it does succeed in that it calls into question its own linear historical narrative. It suggests that the family has other ghosts that haunt its history. However, any of this cinematic nuance is lost in Ohama's next two films, which are part of an educational series, and these motifs do not reappear again until Ohama's master-piece *Obāchan's Garden* in 2001.

Watari Dori: A Bird of Passage (1997) and *The Travelling Reverend* (2000), shows none of the nuance of Ohama's earliest film *The Last Harvest*, or her latest film *Obāchan's Garden* (2001); this lack of nuance is a result of the funding and production criteria of the series A Scattering of Seeds: The Creation of Canada produced by Peter Raymont, Lindalee Tracey, and Maria Pimentel, of White Pine Pictures, with the participation of the following institutions (many of them having a mandate to promote Multiculturalism): Canada Television and Cable Production Fund, Telefilm Canada – Equity Investment Program CTCPF – Licence Fee Program, Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Multiculturalism Canada, Canadian Heritage, Rogers Telefund, History Television, Réseau de l'Information de la Société Radio-Canada, Vision TV, and SCN. *Watari Dori* tells the story of Irene Tsuyuki, a second-generation Japanese Canadian. It is noteworthy, however, that the film jacket identifies Tsuyuki as a first-generation Japanese Canadian, despite the fact that she identifies herself as Canadian-born, and qualifies her children as sansei throughout the film's narrative.

The packaging of the film by the producers reveals the imposition of dominant rhetoric onto Ohama's attempts to narrate Japanese Canadian history. The Japanese Canadian generational classification is rejected in favour of another paradigm of classification where the first generation remains immigrant and transient, and only the second generation of children born in Canada is Canadian. The film's packaging also reveals other biases. Winifred Awmack's relationship with the internment community at Tashme is described in a one-sided manner. Awmack, who had been a teacher at the Tashme internment camp, is characterized as the purveyor of happiness in the camp, the missionary who brought joy to the dull lives of the victimized Japanese Canadian community. The back jacket of the film states that "It was Awmack who gave *Japanese* students happy memories that sustained their spirits during the war and long afterwards when some of them left for Japan" (emphasis added, *Watari Dori*). The production packaging identifies the internees as "Japanese" while identifying Irene Tsuyuki herself as "first generation Japanese Canadian." This discrepancy places Irene Tsuyuki in two categories and/or falsely distances the other internees from her, making them Japanese nationals who should have been deported, while she was the anomaly, as a Canadian citizen. Ohama's narration creates no such confusion, clearly identifying Irene Tsuyuki as a Japanese Canadian. The series producers want to portray an "empathetic" history (as Lindalee Tracey puts it in the companion book), but in telling the tales of historical human rights abuses, they demonstrate their lack of knowledge or insight into the complexities of the contemporary daily-lived ethno-cultural experiences of the communities they are mythologizing. Instead, they frame every transgression of the government and dominant discourse as a hurdle for immigrants, that, when overcome, has made stronger both the ethno-cultural communities and the "greater self," a term which could mean several things ranging from the Canadian nation to the dominant discourse. In this paradigm, injustices are opportunities for ethno-cultural communities to prove their strength and determination to become Canadian, even if the Canadianization (i.e. economic success) of those communities takes several generations after the original abuses, and the links are not necessarily clear-cut.

Watari Dori is the story, not only the story of Japanese Canadian internment, but of Irene Tsuyuki's "repatriation" back to Japan, a country she had never seen before. However, her story ends well, as she managed to return to Canada as soon as it was legally possible. In 1949 when the federal government reconsidered its stance on the deportations, and Irene – as a Canadian citizen by birth-right – was permitted re-entry into the country. In the film, Irene and her teacher, Winifred Awmack, are reunited after 50 years and together they visit the old internment camp, reminiscing about that time.

Watari Dori is emphatic about Irene Tsuyuki's Canadianness, and her family's complete integration into the Canadian Multicultural landscape. Irene claims she becomes more Canadian with age: "Oh I think that in my later years I feel like I am more Canadian. I still have a sense of the Japanese culture but I am thinking more Canadian." While that may well be true, the film negotiates none of the polemics of being an ethno-cultural citizen in a bi-lingual country, where English and French culture dominate. The film speaks only to the positive results of Multiculturalism. Irene speaks about her family, and her interpretation of her family dynamics reveals the level to which she has appropriated and believes in the promises of Multicultural rhetoric. Her family is her testimonial to the success of Trudeau-era politics, ideals, and promises:

> I [Irene] have five children and my children are sanseis – third generation. We have four daughters and one son and we have 8 grandchildren. All our grandchildren have mixed blood, different ethnic backgrounds: Ukrainian, Japanese, English, Norwegian, a little bit of German. I hope that they would get interested in pursuing their different cultures. To me, it would broaden each one's mind.

Ohama narrates Irene's life as a story of personal survival and success.

However, the narrative voice-over also aligns itself with the political stance of the series and the perspectives of the co-producers and story editors who, in the late 1990s, were still perpetuating the Multicultural rhetoric of the 1970s. In fact, Pierre Berton himself wrote the preface to the companion book *A Scattering of Seeds,* authored by Lindalee Tracey. Berton opens the preface by stating that this "is a country, as the author [Tracey] reminds us, that has never been friendly to those strangers who have arrived here from far shores. Each successive wave of immigrants does its best to frustrate the arrival of the next wave" (ix). However, he ends his preface by claiming that there remains reason for optimism: "If the story of our immigrants has been a tale of hardship and despair it is also an odyssey of hope and triumph. And that is what this book is all about" (Tracey x). In the Introduction, Tracey writes that there is a necessity to tell the untold stories of immigrant pioneers, because otherwise they are discarded from the "greater self," a dangerously nationalistic comment. She writes:

> History for me is working people's hands; [...] They are the hands of immigrants with work to do, the hands of my people and of me. I owe it to their unrecorded efforts to remember – for to forget is to be orphaned by history and exiled from the greater self.
>
> This book celebrates the efforts of early immigrants to establish themselves, and the cold, hard fact of their survival. . . . This is their story and ours, not a definitive history, but an empathetic one. Listen to their quiet courage. And imagine. (xix)

While she may narrate an empathetic story, it is anything but critically astute. Each of the stories ends on a positive Disney-esque note. Since she does not write of Japanese Canadian history in the book, the example of Sikh immigration to Canada can stand as an example of the ideals propagated by *A Scattering of Seeds* (the book), as well as the series of the same name.

Tracey narrates the story of Bagga Singh, an early Sikh immigrant to Canada who, as she recounts, was forced to live apart from his wife and first two children for seventeen years, because a year after he came to Canada immigration laws barred the entry of his wife and two daughters. By the time his wife was able to join him seventeen years later in Canada, his daughters were married adult women. He lived the entirety of his adult life in Canada, facing discrimination and earned a lower wage for equal work. While Lindalee Tracey's narrative addresses all of those issues in a cryptic way through a third person linear narrative, the struggles of Bagga Singh's life all become part of a noble life effort that is deemed successful for two reasons: In 1947 Sihks were "given" the right to vote, and the Sikh community has become an economically viable segment of society in the contemporary. In other words, economic success has bought them the status of recuperated model minority. Tracey writes:

> Fifty years after their [Sikh's] arrival in Canada, they were finally given the right to vote, in April 1947.
>
> Three generations of Sikhs have grown into citizenship since that first lonely generation of Canadians have prized their education and moved steadily into affluence. Bagga Singh's own granddaughter Belle, studied journalism and became a local television reporter in a city that had once promised to keep its doors closed to Asians like her grandfather. (232)

To recap this man's story (which is really a frame story to recount the *Komagata Maru*), Bagga Singh, whose specific role in the community's lobby for the vote is not clear, died seven years after he was "given" the vote. His two married daughters in the Punjab had grown up never knowing a father, because he was working for unfair wages moving from job to job and place to place in a country that discriminated against him. However, all of his struggles are minimized by creating a noble character out of him with the concluding comments that reference his involvement in trying to assist the *Komagata Maru* passengers in his youth, and his ambiguous role in achieving the franchise:

> Bagga Singh died in 1954, at the age of sixty-three. But his searing sense of inclusion, hard won by a faith that had itself risen from the wounds of injustice half a world away, helped make a new nation more just. (233)

The conclusion of Bagga Singh's oversimplified biography is written in much the same vein as that of Ohama's concluding lines in the *Watari Dori* film:

> Irene has taken her story outside the community, sharing her strength with others. She has been honored as a leader and has continued to be active with volunteer work. Irene Tsuyuki rose above her experiences of injustice, loss and pain, with dignity and determination. This is her legacy to all of us and to Canada – her country.

The ending reveals the narrative purpose of demonstrating that Japanese Canadians, as Canadian citizens, are an important part of Canadian history and contemporary community. This is a narrative of unproblematized assimilation. Irene and Winifred reminisce about the many joys of the internment years, with some focus on the pain experienced by Japanese Canadians who had to leave the country when they were "repatriated." The narrative transforms Irene, and by proxy all Japanese Canadians, into saints, for productively getting on with their lives and not dwelling in bitterness after what the government did to them. Winifred Awmack plays a key role in classifying the Japanese Canadian reaction to the internment as noble and beyond reproach. The teacher also interprets for the viewer, the role of the Anglican church that benevolently educated the interned students, so that they would not be second class citizens. The irony, of course, is that while white Protestant missionaries were educating Japanese Canadian children, the white Protestant government was ensuring their status as second-class citizens by eradicating Japanese Canadians as an economically or politically viable community. Nevertheless, education, whether it is organized by church or state, always belies a bias. *Watari Dori* simplifies the internment, the repatriation, and glosses over Irene's personal struggles by emphasizing the successful integration and intermarriage of her children and grandchildren, who embody what Canadians have been taught to call Multiculturalism, but which functions for all intents and purposes as assimilation.

Ohama's third film *The Travelling Reverend* does much the same thing. It mythologizes and canonizes this Buddhist priest – or Reverend, as he is called in the film – similar to the way that *Watari Dori* mythologizes Irene. According to the same formulaic construction, Reverend Yutetsu Kawamura's ministry to his Japanese Canadian community becomes idealized beyond that of a typical pioneer narrative, because of the wartime hardships he suffered, both economic and political. The narrative reports all of his activities under the rubric of community service, distancing his actions from the political realm, despite the fact that his role as community leader and Japanese language teacher, and supplier of Japanese Canadian goods would have made him a questionable figure.

As spiritual guide, community leader, and cultural link to Japan, he and his wife created and maintained both a religious and social community that revolved around the Buddhist temple. For this same kind of activity, Italian and German men were interned during the Second World War. Reverend Kawamura ran a store out of the temple, where he provided Japanese products not available elsewhere. Reverend Kawamura also ran several Japanese schools in his area. When Japan bombed Pearl Harbour, and Japanese Canadians were being *evacuated* from the West Coast, Reverend Kawamura helped Japanese Canadians find work on beet farms, instead of having to go to internment camps. How he managed this is not clearly explained. It is possible that he was recuperated by the RCMP as a tool of the state. The powerful role he played in several small Japanese Canadian communities in Alberta is never recognized as having been a political threat to the Second-World-War government. Instead, the narrative centers on the personal and communal role that Reverend Kawamura played, with special attention given to the fact that his role has meant something different to the various generations of Japanese Canadians:

> For my Grandparents Reverend Kawamura was a source of spiritual strength and support. For me he has been a source of memory and guidance as I move between two cultures.

Reverend Kawamura bore a heavy burden of social responsibility, and when the effort exhausted him, he turned to the land to rejuvenate him. The tenor of the narrative is such that he found solitary comfort by spending time in the Canadian landscape collecting fossils. His attachment to the Canadian landscape and the Canadian nation was so strong that after spending ten years serving as a priest in Hawaii, he retired and returned home to Canada.

Any mention of Reverend Kawamura as a controversial figure is glossed over, focusing instead on his important role as a mediator of Japanese and Canadian culture, through mention of the awards garnered from both the Japanese government and the Canadian government for his life's work, as well as his Canadian family. The narrative explains that he now has five generations of descendants in Canada, and the image associated with this voice over is of Reverend Kawamura surrounded by family in his living room, holding a baby of mixed ethnicity.

The lack of ideological courage in *Watari Dori* and *The Travelling Reverend* can only be a product of the formulaic demands of the series A Scattering of Seeds, since Ohama had been working on her film *Obāchan's Garden* simultaneously as she wrote and directed these films. It is problematic that a potentially innovative filmmaker is recuperated by the well-funded "educational" series. The series are authenticated by the participation of ethnic minority filmmakers, such as Ohama, but the power of the producers has an obvious impact on the final text. These texts are recuperated narrations of Japanese Canadian identity no more challenging to the status quo than were the historical narratives created solely by the dominant discourse. It is problematic then that these films have greater potential to make an impact on the Japanese Canadian narration of identity and this ethno-cultural group's place within a Multicultural Canadian nation than do more innovative narratives like Onodera's *The Displaced View*, because her film was less broadly distributed at the time of its release, is presently available only through smaller distribution companies in the U.S. and Canada, and is not readily marketed for institutional purchase.

In contrast, educational series such as A Scattering of Seeds and Mother Tongue are easily available to the public through television broadcast, libraries that purchase them as part of the annual funds allocated towards multicultural spending, and by individual purchase at affordable prices. These episodes will be played on television and in schools around the country for decades, as part of educational curricula and programming, just as the films -- *of Japanese Descent* and *Enemy Alien*, as well as the book version of Pierre Berton's television episode "Exodus of the Japanese" are readily available in libraries and for purchase – despite their biased perspectives – because they were initially produced and published by the NFB and McClelland & Stewart respectively, ensuring their widespread and continuing distribution.

Ohama's NFB documentary *Obāchan's Garden*, released in 2001[133] narrates a matrilineal Japanese Canadian family history more complex than the formulaic internment narrative. Written over the "ghostext"[134] of the literary and cinematic internment narratives that precede it[135], this documentary is multilayered and revolves around two cycles of life in the Buddhist tradition. There is the family history that includes Obāchan as issei, but belongs to her children as nisei; in other words, the story of wartime relocation and the postwar diaspora of Japanese Canadians is more central to the lives of her nisei children. The documentary also narrates Obāchan's story that speaks to the issues of the issei; as an issei, the *evacuation* was one of many displacements, the first being away from Japan and her past life there, which created a personal connections to "enemy territory," and resulted in divided/dual[136] wartime loyalties. These predominantly issei issues created intergenerational family disruptions with the nisei children, born in Canada. Ohama illustrates the complexity of issei life in Canada for immigrants like Obāchan who were not only running to a new life, but running away from a past life. Narrating the silence that has contained Obāchan's story, Ohama exposes taboo aspects of her family history. This presentation of her maternal family is a bold divergence from the established documentary narrative of the wartime Japanese Canadian experience, because from the 1970s until the present, sympathetic[137] narrations of the *evacuation*, coming from both Japanese Canadians and the dominant discourse, have diverged little from the facts. However, *Obāchan's Garden*, as a self-reflexive presentation of a silenced history, focuses on what is less clear. The film relies less on the favourable facts of historical injustice that have been repeatedly reiterated and more on personal memories that are acknowledged to be as much the product of dreams as they are past realities. This self-reflexive narrative is a reaction against previous narratives that claim authority. Ohama's subjective sansei version of history focuses not on what is known, but exposes the unknown, a daring move that reveals at least some of the complexities that created the post war silencing of the issei, and to a lesser degree the nisei.

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[133] nominated for an Academy Award in 2002 in the category of best documentary film

[134] Term borrowed from William Anselmi's article "Displacing the Shadow."

[135] It should be noted Ohama's *Watari Dori: A Bird of Passage*, and *The Travelling Reverend* are part of that discourse.

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[136] Divided is the common term used to refer to the Japanese Canadian situation during the Second-World-War. I prefer the distinction of dual.

[137] For example there is Pierre Berton's CTV program "Exodus of the Japanese" and the NFB documentary *Enemy Alien*.

Ohama's *Obāchan's Garden* is a response to the most significant issue imbedded in the Japanese Canadian literary and cinematic corpus: the fear of invisibility and the danger of recuperation by the dominant discourse. Whether positively or negatively conceived, the inherent hierarchy of a Multicultural discourse within which the dominant discourse defines itself vis-à-vis what it *is not* and vice versa, the Japanese Canadian is exploited either as model minority or as Enemy Alien. As model minority, they flirt with assimilation. Status as Enemy Alien or Other is recuperated by a dominant discourse that defines itself over against the excluded group. The Japanese Canadian identity is always negotiating its own visibility trying to escape the invisibility of recuperation. Ohama's narrative in *Obāchan's Garden* reveals, like many sansei narratives,[138] a desire to capture a Japanese Canadian identity that is in danger of erasure through assimilation. Ohama's daughters, one of whom is the great-grandchild in the documentary, are of mixed ethnicity and their Japanese heritage is only one part of their identity. Obāchan, as an issei, represents the cultural heritage of the entire family, because her nisei children, sansei grandchildren and yonsei great grandchildren do not have a nuanced understanding of their cultural heritage, which originates in a distant country. Each generation has a different, and potentially more distant relationship with their Japanese ancestry. Ohama, as narrator, says that "For us [the family], Obāchan has been our Japaneseness, but we have never really understood very much about her or the culture. We know the taste of her sugar cookies and the sound of her voice singing but more of what we know is from what is not said than what is said, which leaves a lot of things buried in that silence." The desire to capture the story of the grandmother is a desire to capture a family history that has been "buried," as well as to capture the vanishing "Japaneseness" that Obāchan represents. Through this vigilant, creative narrative that builds on the simplified existing narratives, Ohama is resisting the invisibility resulting from the recuperation of Japanese Canadian identity by the dominant discourse. Canadian Multicultural policy, despite its professed aspirations to encompass a multitude of diverse cultural communities, results in assimilation, such that ethnicity itself risks becoming historical: a thing of the past. When Multiculturalism incorporates or recuperates minority identities, ethnic identities grounded in changing, developing and adapting narratives cease to exist and ethnicity becomes a static historical narrative of ancestry. If Obāchan's silent story is never given voice, then the ethnic history of her great-grandchildren will be lost, and with it the position from which to establish contemporary identity formations. However, the recovery of a family history, so long kept silent, is a tenuous project founded in memories distorted by dreamed realities. Ohama, as director and narrator, subverts her own version of history, thus calling into question the authority of any one version of the past.

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[138] Stan Yogi writes, "many of these sansei, however, write with a sense of urgency, to capture Japanese American communities that are either disappearing or changing in dramatic ways" (Cheung *Companion* 142).

The first sequence of *Obāchan's Garden* opens with the visual of a young girl walking through a cherry orchard. We later discover that she is the great-granddaughter of Obāchan. The introductory voice-over asks:

> How do we learn about things that have happened before us? And what about memories, what people remember? Are these memories always real? And what about what we dream or wish for, can these become real one day?[139]

Throughout the documentary the director patches together her grandmother's memories, which are indistinguishably entwined with her dreams, in an effort to record her story before she dies, and takes her secrets to her grave; secrets that provide a tenuous foundation for a family history. Ohama researches, rediscovers and where necessary reinvents her grandmother's story in a way that allows her to provide her daughters with a family history to pass on to their children. Ohama remains self-reflexive about the creative act of rendering a potential version of Obāchan's life that will add to the family and community history. Like her literary 'fore-mother, Joy Kogawa (Canadian nisei), who "implicitly or explicitly questions the possibility of restoring an authoritative minority history and shies away from a complacent return to the past" (Cheung, *Articulate Silences*13), Ohama dares to undermine her own version of history by questioning the accuracy of ephemeral and dreamlike memories. The film demonstrates the incongruencies between Obāchan's version of the past, and that of her various family members in Japan, all of whom have diverse recollections that, again, are not always supported by the historical records. Ohama is cognizant that this history, presented through one of the truth-telling genres – the documentary - is filling in the silences that her grandmother is incapable of clarifying. Her family's experience was not always as informed as the historical 20/20 vision presented in formulaic internment narratives. Ohama's narrative relies little on historical facts and more on historical events as personal experience. Instead of archivally reconstructing her grandmother's life through the incorporation of documentation, Ohama incorporates docu-drama representations that creatively "dream"/imagine the details that have been erased by 75 years of silence. The narrative makes clear that Ohama not only offers an addition to the Japanese Canadian identity but she also calls into question the formation of the community identity.

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[139] The backdrop of this quote is haunting music. The scene is shot in black and white, and there is a jump to the historical photo with the subtitle of Hiroshima. Then, the docu-drama reenactment begins, and it recreates the grandmother's reaction to learning of the Hiroshima earthquake.

The narrative voice-over of the film explains that this documentary was meant to be a simple story to celebrate the 100th birthday of the family matriarch. It ended up being a five-year long excavation to uncover what remained of the family history. Interestingly, while the story of the family revolves around the wartime relocations and the postwar diaspora of Japanese Canadians, Obāchan's story does not. Ohama incorporates the Second-World-War *evacuation* from the coast[140] as a significant moment in Obāchan's history, but not as the defining moment. It is, however, the defining moment for her nisei children who go back to their coastal Steveston home in the documentary, as "part of a much bigger process." There, they replant Obāchan's garden with a plantmap that she provides them. The garden itself is somewhat disorderly – like Obāchan and her memories – but the planting of the garden, the desire to "put down roots" is the family's group effort to come to terms with their displaced past. The cycle of Obāchan's life takes her back to Japan and events that precede her life in Canada.

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[140] This leads to internment for many families, but for the Obāchan's family it meant relocation to a farm in Manitoba.

The great secret of Obāchan's past, that she has kept silent for seventy-five years, is that before coming to Canada, she had three children by a first husband that no one in Canada knew about. The details of her previous life are unclear. Obāchan is unable to explain her husband's motivations for leaving her and taking her two daughters with him, other than saying he was going to work at the Imperial Palace. She speaks, rather, of her dreams. She says:

> I always had these dreams. They were always in my heart. Fumiko. Chieko. So many dreams of their cute faces. I knew they were close to the emperor so it was fine. I've always talked to the pictures… that's all I will say. [she is emotional and waves the camera away with her hand.] That's enough. That's enough.

Based on that small piece of information given to her by her husband before his departure, she dreamt that her daughters were living within the walls of the Imperial Palace, under the protection of the Emperor. However, there is little historical evidence to support Obāchan's memories. The narrator makes it clear that Obāchan's revelations are confusing to the family both in Canada and in Japan. Obāchan's daughter, who is Ohama's mother, voices her concerns that this is all the product of an old woman's dreams/imagination. Her children in Canada had never heard any mention of previous children, and yet there are photos. Out of context, the value of photos as proof is questioned. In Japan, Obāchan has several younger siblings, and each have their own version of what happened to Obāchan's first marriage.[141] The mystery about why her husband left her and took the girls is never explained in the film by Obāsan, perhaps because she never knew exactly what his reasons were or perhaps because she dreamt away the reality. The narrative voice-over fills in the missing information, explaining that "the failure of not bearing a healthy son made her a failure as a wife and a woman." The family believes that her husband left her because their third child, a son, died soon after birth; but, Obāchan never confirms this. The film remains self-reflexive about the necessity to fill-in, dream, and re-invent a past that has been eradicated through the fallibility of memory. There are some elements of her past, still, that remain shrouded in mystery, silenced forever by her death in 2002, at the age of 104.

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[141] Ohama accepts the authority of the written documents over those of photographs. Keep in mind that much of the narrative of internment is done with the use of archival photos, often the same archival photos used in a variety of situations with different narratives to give them context.

What is brought to the fore by the revelations of a past previously silenced, is another subtle but significant point; Obāchan's home was Hiroshima,[142] Japan and like many issei, she had an entire family in Japan – Mother, Father, siblings, children etc. As a Japanese, Obāchan revered the Emperor of Japan as a living god. For her entire life she took great comfort in the belief that her two daughters were with the Emperor. The documentary reveals, of course, that they were not. The two girls were adopted by other families. Obāchan's memories are exposed as unreliable. However, insight into her worldview allows the viewer of the film to appreciate the heightened significance the end of the war had for Obāchan, beyond the disillusionment of the average Japanese.[143] The surrender of Japan signified that Emperor Showa had been defeated, creating anxieties for Obāchan about the well-being of her daughters who she dreamed were living under his care. This dream became even more important after the bombing of Hiroshima. Through a docu-drama re-enactment, Ohama emphasizes the personal significance the bombing of Hiroshima had for Obāchan. In one particular scene, the younger Obāchan (portrayed in the docu-drama flashbacks) hears the devastating news of the atomic bomb from her husband, who is sitting at the kitchen table listening to the radio. She grabs her violin, rushes from the house and is seen running over the prairie fields, screaming "Okonomichi, Okaaaasan, Otooosan, Sueko, Fumiko, Chieko." The first name is that of her town, followed by family members. The last two names are her lost daughters' names. At the end of the scene she collapses in the field crying, curls into the foetal position and is covered by falling cherry blossoms. Her body is symbolically buried, like the pain that she buries in a lifetime of silence. Obāchan's only hope that the girls have survived the atomic explosions lies in the belief that they are far from Hiroshima with the Emperor in Tokyo. In this re-enactment and others,[144] and through the consistent reiteration of Obāchan's reverence for the Emperor, as well the inclusion of footage showing Obāchan shouting Banzai at a family gathering, Ohama subtly but clearly addresses the complexities of the issei relationship to *both* Canada *and* Japan.

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[142] Because Obasan's home is Hiroshima, Ohama can also incorporate the very real close ties that Japanese people in Canada had to Japan. As a native of Hiroshima, the greatest horror of the war is conveyed not in relationship to the relocation, but to the bombing of Hiroshima and the idea that her entire family had been annihilated. There are so many more betrayals by Canada (as one of the Allied powers) than the mere internment of the Japanese. Perhaps the issue for the issei is that they would not know which battle to fight because their loyalties are torn in so many different directions. For the nisei, and sansei their loyalties were most often with Canada, because many had/have no direct relationship to Japan (unless they were Japanese educated kibei). They were able to assess the relocation in terms of their relationship to Canada. Despite the fact that Canada had betrayed them, it was also the only home that many of them had ever known.

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[143] Mikiso Hane writes that part of the reason that the Japanese joined the war was because they "thought of themselves as a unique race. The continuous talk of the Yellow Peril in the United States [and the unmistakably racist opposition to Japanese immigration] strengthened the position of the anti-American, radical nationalists in Japan. The central issue, however, was China, and by December, 1941, public opinion on both sides had become so fierce that the outbreak of the war was greeted by many people with almost a sigh of relief" (308). They believed that they were a unique race, led by a living god – Emperor Showa.

[144] There is another re-enactment scene in the film, which takes place on the last New Year's Eve that the family spends at home before the relocation, where three men discuss the war and their divided loyalties. The men are not clearly defined. One is Obāchan's husband and the other is presumably the husband of Obāchan's friend. The identity of the third is unclear. Their indistinct identities are significant, in that they could be any group of issei men, torn between their loyalty to Canada and their loyalty to Japan.

Ohama presents a nuanced version of one family history, by illustrating the intergenerational viewpoints and the heterogeneity of the community. Silence is simultaneously a cultural expression of strength and courage and an oppressive mechanism that contains the shameful and taboo history of Japanese Canadians[145]. Japanese social decorum places a value on silence and reticence, which is one reason that in the Canadian post-war context the community responded to the tragedy and loss of the wartime internment with the attitude *Shigata ga nai*, "it couldn't be helped". They resigned themselves to the past and they stopped speaking about a contentious and emotional historical moment, in order to move on. However, as Ohama points out, silence also buries the complex realities resulting from dual loyalty. Shame and taboo kept the issei silent. In an effort to assimilate after the war, Japanese Canadians were anxious to prove their loyalty to Canada through a rejection of Japanese language and culture. And, assimilation was made easier by Canadian government policies that legislated that all people of Japanese ancestry move east of the Rockies or repatriate back to Japan. The diaspora of the community meant that Japanese Canadian communities had to begin again, for a second time since the beginning of the war and a third time for the issei who had begun as immigrants. Left destitute, they were in survival mode, which left no energy[146] to fight injustice. The shame associated with the internment ensured that it was rarely referenced and it slowly became a part of family histories buried by silence. Later the nisei, whose loyalties were more clearly defined and therefore who felt perhaps more severely the sting of betrayal by the only country many had ever known,[147] were the ones to inquire about their past, and break the silence of more than two decades. They began to narrate the injustice of internment and relocation of which the nisei writer, Joy Kogawa, is perhaps the most renowned example. The sansei, many born during or after the war, had all been educated in the Canadian public school system, and they understand the vocal mandate (Cheung, *Articulate Silences* 8) of North America. They are less resigned and reticent than their parents and grandparents, and in the late-1970s, encouraged by the American Civil Rights Movement, they began to narrate their identity through politics and the redress campaign. In 2001, thirteen years after redress was achieved, Ohama is able to create a more complex family history written over the "ghostext"/palimpsest of redress. Governmental redress acknowledges the victimization of Japanese Canadians at the hands of a racist wartime government. This recognition of victimization gives permission to Japanese Canadians to explore silenced wartime experiences, such that their full and complex history is accessible to future generations. Misunderstood silence allows for the easy recuperation of the Japanese Canadian narrative by the dominant discourse. Ohama, in *Obāchan's Garden*, directly addresses the silences that complicate

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[145] It is Kogawa who "explores the varying natures of silence, its oppressiveness as the mechanism of secrets but also its symbolism as a sign of strength and courage" (Yogi 138).

[146] They had no energy or desire, because they wanted to show their loyalty to Canada by working hard. At the same time they wanted to avoid any negative attention by erasing the identifying marks of being Japanese: language, and other cultural signifiers. However, they could never erase their Japanese appearance. Their status as a visible minority meant that they could not vanish into the Canadian social landscape; constantly being identified as "Japanese" would eventually motivate the

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sansei to try to rediscover their Japanese culture, because even though they knew nothing of the language and culture, they were seen as Japanese. R. Miki talks about the experiences of being identified as a visible minority, as does Rochelle Yamagishi in "Sansei Women." See conference proceedings *Changing Japanese Identities in a Multicultural Canada* (2003).

[147] The complexity of the nisei is that some were sent, by their issei parents, to Japan for their education. So, some nisei would have understood well the divided loyalties of the issei in the community. Those who had never been to Japan likely had a less complicated relationship to the country.

intergenerational communication when the Japanese aesthetic and social value for silence is only partially understood by the Canadian-born children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Suspended between two cultures, one more verbal and one less so, Ohama "dreams"/represents her Grandmother's story in a way that allows her to contribute to the dynamic Japanese Canadian narration in dialogue with the dominant discourse, by toying with taboo, and pushing the safe confines of the internment narrative of victimization that cannot encompass the complexity of a heterogeneous wartime community. While the legacy of the issei and nisei is a literary and cinematic aesthetic of silence, the sansei legacy is to address that silence, expose the taboos that have created it, and reformulate their own balance between silence and vocality. Japanese Canadians are in a constant struggle against recuperation by the Multicultural narrative either through *exclusion* as Enemy/Other/Outsider/Ethnic or through *inclusion* as model minority citizen. Ohama's *Obāchan's Garden* is a creative act that challenges the simplified narrative of internment that cannot contain the diversity of the Japanese Canadian wartime community or the complexity of their experiences. It also challenges the contemporary audience, who is able to recognize the parallels between the Second-World-War experience of Japanese Canadians and the present condition of Muslims living through the War on Terrorism. Heterogeneous communities defy the simplicity of categorical stereotypes and racial profiling. It is daring of Ohama to point out the dual loyalty of her issei grandmother, but by doing so through a narrative that undermines the authority of any one narrative over the entire community, she emphasizes the importance of individual experience and a community narrative that can encompass heterogeneity.

CHAPTER FIVE

Positive Results of the *Redress Era*

a) Rewriting the Re-membering

Many Japanese Canadian writers and filmmakers have artistically imagined the *re-membering* period of Japanese Canadian history, notably Joy Kogawa, Kerri Sakamoto, and Ohama. The role of the 1970s is crucial to the re-imagination and the re-membering of the Japanese Canadian identity and the re-creation of a virtual Japanese Canadian community that remains dispersed across Canada, as one of the repercussions of the Second World War. Kogawa's *Obasan* was the first and most acclaimed story of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* to be written by a Japanese Canadian, and the popularity of the text created awareness about Japanese Canadian wartime experiences. While Joy Kogawa's book achieved such renown for its successful narration of wartime experiences, it is often, and should not be, overlooked as the story of *re-membering*. It is equally the story of the Second World War and of the 1970s era of rediscovering past family histories, and the (her)story of past events.

Obasan's enormous success has ironically become the Achilles' heel of the Japanese Canadian narration of identity. The novel has been dubbed the iconic story of Japanese Canadian wartime experience. This in itself is part of the process of recuperation of Japanese Canadian history and identity by the dominant discourse; because the *evacuation* and post-war Japanese Canadian history is often relegated to a reductive understanding of the novel, the history of Japanese Canadian experience becomes synonymous with the experiences of the Nakane and Kato families, and

Naomi becomes the voice of Japanese Canadians. Therefore, it has become necessary not only to add nuance to the Japanese Canadian identity and narration of *evacuation* (internment and wartime experiences) by presenting various histories and multiple identities, but also to revisit the process and period of *re-membering*.

Since *Obasan*, other Japanese Canadian writers and filmmakers (Midi Onodera, Linda Ohama, Mieko Ouchi, Michael Fukushima, Rick Shiomi, Terry Watada, etc.) have taken up the project of rewriting/re-membering something which is both a response to the narrations of the dominant discourses of Canadian television and the National Film Board, as well as a reaction to the abundance of literary criticism focusing on *Obasan*. Over the palimpsest of *Obasan*, Kerri Sakamoto has written numerous novels, short-stories and films that articulate a re-membering of Japanese Canadian history

b) Kerri Sakamoto as Innovator

Kerri Sakamoto was born in Toronto, Ontario in 1959, fourteen years after the war. She grew up in Etibicoke during the 1960s and 1970s; the racism of her childhood and the resultant struggle with her Asian American identity as Japanese Canadian is evident in the characters of her short stories, novels and screenplays. Aside from a focus on issues of race and identity common to all of her stories, novels, and screenplays, is the fact that the majority of them are set in the 1970s, a time when she would have personally been going through teenage self-discovery, and also a time when Japanese Canadian history was being re-membered. In the 1970s a virtual Japanese Canadian community and identity was emerging. Sakamoto's various short-stories, screenplays, and novels all address issues of race, identity formation, and the outcomes of secret family and/or community histories, and they are predominantly set in the 1970s, although the timeframe is not always explicit.

The decade of *re-membering* was a period of transition for Japanese Canadians, and the desire among artists to write and rewrite the history of this era is intriguing. Sakamoto is especially fixated on the period of the 1970s, the *re-membering* of "Japanese Canadian." *My Niagara* was released in 1992 and it is set in the late 1970s. Aside from her short story "Ghost-Town" (2001), clearly set during the internment, her other short stories "Walk-In Closet" (1993), and "View from the Edge of the World" (1993), are set in the 1970s. The film *Strawberry Fields*, released in 1997 is set in 1971; her first novel *The Electrical Field*, published in 1998 is set in 1975[148]. This is the same decade that Pierre Berton's "Exodus of the Japanese" aired and the NFB produced the film *Enemy Alien*; the latter was released in 1975, which is the same year that Sakamoto's novel is set. Finally, Sakamoto's second novel, *One Hundred Million Hearts*, published in 2004 is situated in the late 1970s. Also of interest is that Sakamoto has chosen to write the story of the 1970s in both America and Canada: American through *Strawberry Fields*, Canada through the two novels, and both countries through her short-stories that are less specifically located. The short-stories were written when she was living in New York, and they do not clearly identify which nation the stories belong to: those characters and stories transcend national divides, creating an Asian American identity that combines the Canadian and American experience from a social and cultural perspective, despite the different political histories of the two nations' wartime governance.

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[148] In an interview with Eva Tihanyi, Kerri Sakamoto says that *The Electrical Field* is set in 1975: "*The Electrical Field* takes place in 1975, decades after Japanese Canadians were released from the camps." In addition, Sachi has a recording of her and Tam singing songs on tape, after which they speak and record their names and dates. On the tape the date is May 5th, 1975:

> *Today is May the fifth, 1975. It is a sunny day.*
> *Now say your name. Say when your birthday is.*
> *No, say yours.* (269)

By the time Sakamoto began publishing her stories in the early 1990s, *Obasan* had already been speaking for the period of *re-membering* in Japanese Canadian history for over a decade. *Obasan*, published in 1981, is set in 1972. By the time Sakamoto's first novel *The Electrical Field* was released in 1998, *Obasan* had been in print for approximately seventeen years (1981- 1998). *Obasan*'s narrative re-writes the Second World War by contextualizing newspaper articles, government documents, and the narratives of the dominant discourse *à la* Pierre Berton and the NFB, from one (of many) Japanese Canadian perspectives. Sakamoto's writing responds to *Obasan* and challenges its authority as the ultimate Japanese Canadian narrative of *evacuation*. Her writing articulates the 1970s from the vantage point of the *post-redress era*. Where Kogawa created impetus for the redress movement with her novel *Obasan*, Sakamoto's many short-stories, films, and novels come after the Canadian government acknowledged and offered redress for the Japanese Canadian wartime suffering. Where *Obasan* is an overt narrative about rediscovering the family and community wartime history, many of Sakamoto's early works do not even address the moment of internment, but the internment hovers as a backdrop and a psychological motivation/explanation for the behaviour of her nisei characters.

c) *The Electrical Field* (1998)

Set in 1975, the novel *The Electrical Field* explores feelings of loss, alienation, and even self-hatred. The characters in the Yano family, other than Yano himself, have been transformed since they first appeared in Sakamoto's short story "View from the Edge of the World." Where Tad narrates the short-story, Asako Saito (a character not introduced in the short story) is the unreliable narrator of the *The Electrical Field.* What is noteworthy is that Sakamoto had been exploring Japanese Canadian/American characters/identities in her short-story writing and her screenplay *My Niagara*, and she had not been focusing on *evacuation*. She only briefly addressed wartime history in "View from the Edge of the World." Her early writing deals more specifically with the broader questions of identity and prejudice/racism. However, *The Electrical Field* clearly situates itself in the realm of the Canadian social and political landscape, and the novel's characters are Japanese Canadians living out the residual effects of the community *evacuation.*

The specific location and identity of the characters as Canadian is a political act that moves Sakamoto's writing away from general issues of ethnicity, race, marginalization, and *Otherness* applicable to many ethno-cultural groups. It also speaks predominantly to a Canadian audience, many of whom are familiar with *Obasan*, and it writes over the palimpsest of that culturally pervasive text. In *A Sequel to Internment: Eva Tihanyi speaks with Kerri Sakamoto*, Tihanyi questions Sakamoto about the agendas of the two novels, specifically the differing political intentions motivating the authors/texts:

> ET: Your book doesn't seem as overtly political as Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* [1981].
>
> KS: If you mean that my book doesn't chronicle the internment, then yes, that's true. Obasan has told the story of internment so effectively and so beautifully, from the point of view of one who was interned. I experienced internment in its lingering effects in the next generation. *The Electrical Field* takes place in 1975, decades after Japanese Canadians were released from the camps. I wanted to explore the *residue* [emphasis added][149] of that experience in a psychologically complex way. I believe that poses a certain radicality in terms of how the characters are represented -- for me, a political engagement.

Sakamoto re-members the period of *re-membering* for both Canada and America, in response to the dominant discourse's narration of Japanese Canadian *evacuation* and *repatriation*, as well as the academic recuperation of Kogawa's *Obasan* as the ultimate text on *evacuation.* Almost simultaneously with writing *The Electrical Field*, set in Canada, Sakamoto was writing the screenplay for *Strawberry Fields* (yet another field[150]), which tells the story of the American sansei protagonist Irene and her discovery of self and of American Japanese relocation and internment during the 1970s. Ultimately, *The Electrical Field* provides another version of the Canadian decade of *re-membering*, the 1970s; written over the palimpsest of *Obasan*, Sakamoto's novel *re-imagines* Japanese Canadian identity and history from a different vantage point.

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[149] "Residue" evokes the theoretical frameworks of Jungian theory, where "psychic residue" is synonymous with archetypal and mythic paradigms. As part of the collective unconscious the "psychic residue" of the ancestors' experiences, are inherited by the younger generations as dreams, fantasies, myths, etc. Dreams, ghosts, fantasies (even in the form of fairytale) are pervasive in Japanese Canadian literature, and Sakamoto's writing. As an ancestral trace, the *residue* can be retraced, rewritten over the palimpsest of what has already been inscribed.

[150] Sakamoto, in an interview, has claimed that the idea of the electrical field for her is reminiscent of the interment camp. Furthermore, the field is an open space, an empty page onto which can be inscribed a specific experience. The idea of the field also functions as the stage where the re-membering is acted out.

d) Monstrosity and Angel[151]

The political project of Sakamoto's *The Electrical Field* is to rewrite the 1970s. In re-writing it, she is re-membering it for her readers. Her *re-membering* of the past relates to the predominant metaphor of the monster woven into the story of *The Electrical Field*. The monster metaphor functions as both a motif for the characters in the novel, and for the political purpose of the novel itself. A monster *à la* Mary Shelley's classic *Frankenstein* is an amalgam of pieces (members) that are stitched together to create the monster, and that is what this novel does: it re-members the fragments of personal, communal, and official history, until a story is told (not about *evacuation*: internment, repatriation, dispersal etc.) but about the act of re-membering a sense of self in relationship to others. As René Girard argues in *The Scapegoat*, the reconstituted individual that is the monster is the amalgam of many fragments, which often come from the social margins (12-23). Furthermore, the monster embodies the *zeitgeist* of its time, and just as the novel *The Electrical Field* is a cultural monster that is "born of the metaphoric crossroads, as an embodiment of a certain cultural moment – of a time, a feeling, and a place" (Cohen 4), so too are all of the characters in *The Electrical Field*, namely Yano, Asako, Sachi, Stum, and even

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[151] Kerri Sakamoto, very aware of literary theory, might well have been playing with the motifs of monster and angel discussed in Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's 1979 study *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Imagination*, which addresses (among other things) the typical literary motifs of the angel and the monster used to express female anger and resistance to the patriarchy. Gilbert and Gubar argue that women writers "express their own female anger in a series of duplicitous textual strategies whereby both the angel and the monster, the sweet heroine and the raging madwoman, are aspects of the author's self-image, as well as elements of her treacherous antipatriarchial strategies" (Cuddon 317).

Detective Rossi with all that he embodies. Rossi is the ethno-cultural Italian Canadian whose community has also been persecuted and marginalized, even to the extent of having had some members of the community interned during the Second World War; yet, he has become an arm of the state, and of Multiculturalism. He is the ethno-cultural citizen who, as a product of the system, is used to control the Other, with whom he has greater affinity. Sakamoto re-members the monster; the monster is that entity which is responsible for the atrocities of history, and each *member* of the community is part of the monster, making them part-monster. The idea that each person is part-monster and one of the *members* of community history becomes symbolic of another of the novel's themes of shared responsibility. Personal responsibility and awareness of one's own monstrosity also leads to self-hatred and self-punishment, which in Yano's case explodes into a violent rage exercised on his family, Mr. Spears, and himself. Yano's extreme actions perpetrated alone make it easy to hold him solely responsible for the deaths of his family and of Mr. Spears. However, with inside information about the community dynamics, the reader is aware that he is a scapegoat necessary for the official record, but unofficially many of the characters bear some degree of responsibility for the community tragedy. As a literary symbol, the monster functions as a scapegoat. Because all the characters in Sakamoto's novel are part-monster, the narrative emphasizes the small individual acts that culminate in an atrocity for which one person is easily blamed, when in reality many people had a silent hand in creating the circumstances of the event.

In the novel the murder-suicide committed by Yano is the atrocity. However, that act is predicated by the wartime injustices committed against Japanese Canadians by the Canadian government, and the post-war ramifications of those events, combined with individual choices and actions. In this schema, no one escapes responsibility, but many people escape *accountability*,[152] thereby emphasizing the dichotomy between official police reports, official media reports, official history, and lived reality which has to be somehow amalgamated into one's personal history in a way that allows them to carry on with their lives, despite their complicit involvement in historical disasters. Sakamoto juxtaposes two versions of history: official history versus her insider account of history. According to official history, Yano is a monster/ *homo sacer*, whose behaviour is something outside the realm of humanity, whose life is a waste, and from whom other people can learn nothing because as a monster he shares no commonalities with "normal" (non-monster) humans. According to Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, the *homo sacer* was a category in Roman law that no longer exists officially, but for which there is a social space (8). The *homo sacer*, according to Agamben, is the individual that can be killed without repercussions.

> At the same time – being absolutely Other, alien, indeed inhuman – a kind of being that could not be used in ritualistic religious sacrifices and whose murder had no religious significance "*Homo Sacer*" was totally "useless" – completely outside human society and exempt from all obligations and other considerations due to other humans on account of their humanity. (Agamben qtd. in Bauman, *Companion* 61)

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[152] "Accountability" is a reference to both the ethics of responsibility, and a play on the idea of liberal democracy as a capitalist construct that demands not only ethical reckoning but a settling of accounts for liability.

The *homo sacer*, much like the literary symbol of the monster, is dehumanized and this makes the monster's actions or the actions of the *homo sacer* something outside the realm of normal; typically, the *homo sacer* or the monster is exempt from the rules governing humanity and humanity is also exempt from recognizing the very human components shared by the *homo sacer* (or monster).

Sakamoto plays with *accountability* according to the official record by personalizing history; each of the Japanese Canadian characters in *The Electrical Field* is implicated in Yano's act of violence, which demonstrates that those who act monstrously are acting in circumstances created by their environments and communities. The various characters, their actions, and reactions are woven into a web of complicity with Yano's violence. The official narrative of Detective Rossi scapegoats Yano and in the scapegoat paradigm the death of one man is preferable to the elimination of the paradigms of power that maintain the nation.

In *The Electrical Field* the characters are monsters and *homo sacers*. Yano's act – killing his wife, her lover, his two children and then himself – is simply the climax of meaninglessness. The Japanese Canadian characters living around the field are condemned to stasis; they are waste with no progress. The electrical field itself sits in the shadow of Mackenzie Hill, a looming presence in the novel; "Mackenzie Hill loomed ahead to the right" (39). Mackenzie Hill is a looming presence in all of their lives and it is also a symbol for the looming presence of the powerful white government, both historical and contemporary, that is linked with the racist Second-World-War politicians Mackenzie King and Ian Mackenzie, who were largely responsible for the internment. In the novel, the hill is what remains of an old garbage dump. The garbage should be a natural fertilizer, but the hill produces only patchy grasses and trees that are "ashen and frail" (157). Furthermore, the hill is associated with a human holocaust, as it reminds Asako "of another scent from long ago, of burning flesh" (40). It reminds her of other *homo sacer* like herself, Others witch-hunted and burned on hilltops at the stake, Others who found themselves in similar circumstance in Europe who were interned and burned in the Nazi death camps.

Mackenzie Hill is an allegory for the garbage of history; the lives of the Japanese Canadian protagonists in the story become part of that historical waste, only thinly veiled, like the unhealthy layer of grass on the hill. The allegory is that the characters are not consumed by history, but that they are also disposed by history. So, too, are monsters' wasted humans/lives, *homo sacer*; and the knowledge that one is leading a wasted life, or that one is part of the group of *homo sacer*, makes one's life meaningless and dispensable. Shame, and a desire to save one's reputation, leads to the conclusion that death is the only answer. Death is the prescribed act that Yano must perform given the conditions around him that set the stage for his actions. Asako becomes the living dead, wearing her deceased mother's clothes, caring for her ailing father in a home that smells of his decaying body and becomes the home and tomb for both of them. Sachi cuts herself in an effort to efface her own existence; the wounds of history are self-inscribed. Chisako denies who she is, and becomes purely an object of the gaze – Mr. Spears[153] – and the victim of Yano's rage. Yano kills himself and all traces of himself, when he kills his children and his wife. The act prescribed for him is death, because he has been humiliated again: first through the processes of *evacuation* by white colonial powers, and now because a white man has slept with his wife. Yano's human rights have been violated by the state. His recourse to self-respect seems impossible because his attempts to begin redress talks are regarded as the ravings of a madman. In retrospect, he was a man before his time. He wanted to discuss the issue of redress before it was part of a collective agenda.

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[153] The name itself is symbolic. A spear is a phallic symbol, and Mr. Spears is the white colonial figure of power, a.k.a. Chisako's boss, whose conquest is the exotic Japanese Geisha. The name is also a play on the idea of cupid's arrow that spears Chisako, thereby stabbing Yano. The spear can also be associated with the dagger used in *seppuku*: *hara-kiri*. Mr. Spears's conquest leaves Yano no

Many of Yano's actions are motivated by a desire to recover from the humiliation of the wartime events. He marries a Japanese woman because he admires her Japanese-ness, and predominantly her lack of shame. However, she meets him in a defeated post-war context and she is attracted by the aura of Western-ness that he has as a nisei. Once they are in Canada, however, he cannot compete with the lure of real power that Mr. Spears embodies. Chisako recognizes her husband's shame and fear, and it is not attractive. Yano discusses it with Asako:

> "See Asako, that's why she [Chisako] feels no shame to be with a hakujin man. She's proud. That's the difference between her and us, right?" . . . "We're so full of shame, aren't we, Asako? We hide away, afraid that they'll lock us up again. That's it, isn't it?"

---

choice but to try and restore his honour. Of course, his act is an act transformed. It is not the honorable act of seppuku, in that he uses the Western method of a gun. He shoots Chisako once in the chest and Mr. Spears twice.

Mr. Spears' name is also reminiscent of an historical newspaper reporter named Borden Spears, who is mentioned in *Obasan*. Borden Spears wrote an article for the *Toronto* Star on Tuesday March 16, 1948 entitled "Bar Japs for Another Year from Going Back to B.C." The newspaper article represents the ban on Japanese-Canadian return to the West Coast as a measure designed to protect them. It falsely recuperates injustice as a protective measure. The intertextual reference suggests that Chisako's Mr. Spears is also part of the dominant discourse that believes itself to be open- minded and favourable to Japanese Canadians, but is unable to see beyond the limitation of the white world view. The final play on words is that Spears is a play on the great author of Western culture, Shakespeare: he who inscribes meaning and is the standard bearer for aesthetic value.

> I [Asako] could think of no way to respond. I nodded my head sadly, knowing whatever I said would have no effect on him. "That was such a long time ago, Yano," I said. "Things have changed in thirty years."
>
> "Chisako saw it in me [Yano]," he said, not hearing me, not a word. "It isn't attractive, Asako. Especially in a man. I don't blame her." (230-31)

Yano recognizes the waste of their lives. He has never been able to escape the internment camp, merely a formalization of the Otherness that he has existed in since. He knows that to kill himself and his family is to fulfill the expectations of the state. He knows that according to traditional notions of duty and honour his wife's transgression tarnishes his reputation and that of his children. When Yano's wife cheats on him, it is not only her betrayal that drives him to kill himself. It is the fact that other people in his own community know that he has been dishonoured again, first by the *evacuation* and now by the appropriation by whiteness of his wife, who embodies the sexual reproductive space of his Japanese Canadian identity. Mr. Spears is killed with two bullets to the chest. One is personal and the other political. His wife only receives one shot in the chest. That act is personal. He and his children, however, must also die because their lives are wasted. When Asako tells him about his wife's affair his first question is about what to tell his children. She advises him to tell them nothing, but he claims that is impossible:

> "Tell them nothing," I [Asako] said simply, seizing my chance to be strong. "Leave them out of it."

> "How can I?" Yano held onto the beams of the tower again, but this time only to stop himself from wobbling. "We're a family." The sky was suffocating; its thick clouds would neither move nor dissipate. (235)

The members of the family and community are bound to one another, and those relationships are stifling. The environment mirrors Yano's feelings of being metaphorically suffocated, and his physical inability to breathe is an extension of that. Something is restricting his respiration, and symbolically his ability to live freely. He is living a confined life, no more free than the internment camp. Yano knows that he is being defeated by the state-system, which has and will continue to conquer him. As a wasted life, a victim of and a product of the internment camps, he is a *homo sacer*. The physical extension of the *homo sacer* is the concentration camp, a space where behaviour unacceptable under the rule of law becomes the norm, and normal citizens can participate in the decimation of the targeted *homo sacer* groups. The Japanese Canadian characters in the novel are all trapped in a world like the concentration camp that they cannot escape from. In "A Conversation with the Author" at the end of the American publication of the novel Sakamoto says the following:

> I grew up in the suburbs where those vast open hydro fields cut a swath through the landscape and you see those huge, oppressive towers going on in the distance. . . . And after viewing the old sites of the internment camps, I sensed an odd connection between the two landscapes. At one point in *The Electrical Field*, Miss Saito looks out

> onto the grassy field, the houses on the other side, and Mackenzie Hill in the distance and is reminded of the camp: the floor of the valley in the mountains where the rows of tarpaper shacks stood. It's a reflection of her psychological state: she hasn't yet left the camp behind. She hasn't yet let the memories surface.

The electrical field around which the Japanese Canadian families congregate is a space reminiscent of a concentration (internment) camp, where the state would normally be able to eliminate Yano without repercussion because he is a "useless" *homo sacer*. However, within the paradigm of Multiculturalism Yano co-operates in his self-destruction. In a conversation with Asako (Saito-san), prior to his death, Yano talks about the fact that shame can drive a person to kill himself, and that is what the state wanted when it interned Japanese Canadians:

> "They were hoping we'd all commit hara-kiri in the camps, don't you think, Saito-san?" He laughed a dull sour roar, but it pierced me just the same. "People say it wasn't so bad. Easy to say now. But it was bad, wasn't it, Saito-san?" . . . He cleared his throat. "You know, Saito-san, there were a few who did kill themselves. Out of shame." (258)

Yano does what the state has predetermined: the Other eliminates him/herself, whether it is through murder, suicide, or assimilation. S/he is driven to it by the shame imposed on her/him by the state norms, to which the Other can never conform. The Other's code is used against him/her. Multiculturalism can capitalize on a non-dominant minority group's own cultural code and use it against them, much like the kapo: conquer and divide.

Sakamoto creates an intricate web of *accountability*, where the monster resides in each of the characters and motivates his/her actions. Because of the murder-suicide that Yano commits, he is condemned as a monster by Detective Rossi who represents the community at large. However, the reader is aware that Asako, Sachi, and Stum, all play a role in Yano's climactic act of violence. Sachi, Stum, and Asako each tell Yano (directly or indirectly) about his wife, Chisako's, affair. Social relationships and gossip bind each member to their scripted roles. Therefore, they each bear the burden of guilt for their role in Yano's reaction. With no access to power, political or otherwise, the lives of these characters becomes governed by their social relationships, and the gossip – a negative narrative of one another that classifies and stereotypes them in relationship to one another – binds each member to the script. Beyond the monstrous role of these characters, Detective Rossi, and the government are also monstrous: Detective Rossi because he is an extension of a government that eliminates (interns) its citizens who do not conform: Multiculturalism becomes a hegemonic fascist construction. Just as the internment is not the fault of one man, neither is Yano's act of violence. Sakamoto allows for no scapegoats; in fact she criticises the easy solutions that scapegoats provide. Rossi's narrative does not force society to examine the more complex motivations behind atrocious actions. This is in contrast to most other texts on Japanese Canadian internment that have scapegoated the historical government – a non-person – for that which many people participated in and created together.

Yano is monstrous because he commits a heinous act. To be monstrous means to be different, and to define Yano and his actions as monstrous also allows everyone in the complex web of the event to abdicate responsibility. While Cohen concludes that monsters "ask us why we have created them," (20) they also allow us to scapegoat certain monstrous individuals. Yano is the scapegoat, but everyone is responsible for what has taken place, and the involvement of different characters happens at different times. The moment of the murder-suicide is the catastrophic climax of various events that have taken place over time and that have involved innumerable people who are implicated. Yano is the ultimate monstrous creation, but he is also the product of everyone else's monstrous behaviour. He is the Other among the Japanese Canadians in his community, and he is the Other to the dominant discourse. However, his monstrosity is also a reflection of images that contains everyone's monstrosity. His personal hygiene is not impeccable, and hygiene is a symbol of civilization. He refuses to be "civilized," in other words assimilated. He is dishevelled which is symbolic of the fact that history has taken possession of his body. He rants against the Canadian government that has wronged him, and he tries to organize a redress campaign. Yano, as a monster, provides an avenue of entry into the cultural context at the precise moment that he manifests himself; but in alienating him as a monster, society is unable to learn the lessons he has to teach. This creates a moment of silence, only recognizable in retrospect. This is a strategy of meaningful silence that without going into any description represents what cannot be overtly narrated, yet it achieves its purpose while playing with signification of Japanese-

Canadian, silence-vocality. Yano becomes what Cohen terms "the monster who dwells at the gates of difference":

> One kind of difference becomes another as the normative categories of gender, sexuality, national identity, and ethnicity slide together like the imbricated circles of a Venn diagram, abjecting from the center that which becomes the monster. This violent foreclosure erects a self-validating, Hegelian master/slave dialectic that naturalizes the subjugation of one cultural body by another by writing the body excluded from personhood and agency as in every way different, monstrous. (Cohen 11)

This is what Detective Rossi (and by ironic proxy the dominant discourse) do not understand. Detective Rossi,[154] in the name of authority and the dominant discourse of power, investigates the incident. Rossi is of an Italian descent, not "some hakujin stranger" (225), and he is therefore an ethnic Other creating the narrative for the transgression of the Other. Having conducted his investigation, Detective Rossi decides the case is closed, thinking that Yano was crazy and/or a monster:

> "The case is closed now," Detective Rossi was saying. . . . "I keep thinking he had to be some kind of …" He didn't finish. . . .
>
> "Monster," I said softly.
>
> "Was he crazy?"
>
> "No, no. Yes. Maybe." (282)

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[154] Rossi is an Italian name, that means red, and the detective is a general practitioner of semiotics. Sakamoto is playing around with the idea of the semiotician. The Japanese flag is red on white, and he is red, on white.

Rossi is there to discover Yano's motive, but the events that lead up to the murder-suicide are inaccessible to him, because each character has their own secrets about their monstrous interaction with Yano. The State uses one Other to investigate the Japanese Canadian Other because the dominant-minorities can only know the Other by intersession of Others. Detective Rossi is inculcated into the Multicultural system. Multiculturalism therefore creates ethnic tribalism, where the different ethno-cultural minorities are divided from one another and more easily recuperated, sometimes even at the hands of one another. (This is the case with Detective Rossi and Stum, both of whom are highly assimilated characters.) The secrets that each of the characters keeps about their own sense of responsibility for the issue are not readily available to him, and he does not seek them out, because this would create a surplus of information that would not be easy to contain. Simple narratives are easier to control. A crazy Japanese Canadian (*à la* kamikaze) is an acceptable narrative concept. What he uncovers allows him to confirm that Yano is responsible: a very black and white paradigm. What he does not discover through his investigation is the complex web of responsibility that makes so many people, including him as part of the dominant discourse, responsible, if not accountable, for Yano's violent (re)action. Sakamoto imbues each character with an element of the monstrous. The state is also given monstrous qualities. By illustrating that every person in society, as well as the institutions of power that represent the people, are all monstrous – in other words they are all complicit – then the notion of monster as scapegoat is no longer viable. Sakamoto's message is the culpability (if not the accountability) of each character, irrespective of the conclusions of overly simplified official narratives (such as the

Multicultural narratives of *evacuation*/ "internment") that absolve communities of responsibility.

Sakamoto, in a post-redress era, reframes the idea of culpability by focusing not on the issue of guilt and innocence that was the narrative used to achieve redress, but by complicating the issue of responsibility for everyone touched by a heinous act. The novel identifies the superficiality of scapegoating through the polyphonic interpretations of the murder-suicide as it is experienced by the small community living around the electrical field, as opposed to the simple black and white solution offered by the figure of authority, Detective Rossi. In an attempt to make Yano the scapegoat he is named a monster.

e) Responsibility versus *Accountability*

Asako has some understanding of the complex web of people and historical events that play a factor in Yano's actions, and she also recognizes the role that she played in his drastic re-actions. Asako does not believe that internment is the fault of one man alone:

> He [Yano] was looking out at Mackenzie Hill. Thinking, wrong, wrong, wrong. That bugger Mackenzie, he was thinking. As if it could have been just one man, the same man, this hill. (283)

The Electrical Field illustrates that the community is bound together in the web of their interconnected lives, and they therefore bear some of the responsibility for Yano's actions. Just as it was not one Mackenzie alone who could be held responsible for the internment, so Yano cannot not be held solely responsible for the events that unfold.

Responsibility and monstrosity are linked, and Asako knows that she carries an element of the monster within her. Although she fabricates a long narrative for Sachi and for her own sanity, to explain her relationship with her brother Eiji, and to explain the events surrounding his death, she eventually admits that she was partially, if not fully responsible for his death. While Yano is quick to blame the Second-World-War government for the death of Asako's brother, Asako never accepts that explanation. In the same way that the internment was not the responsibility of one man, and her brother's death was not the fault of that same man and/or the internment, it was not merely Yano's fault that he killed his family, Mr. Spears, and himself.

Asako's brother Eiji's death is associated with Yano's actions at the end of the novel. Throughout the novel Asako reveals the story of the death of her brother in layers of truth, much like the layers of garbage that lie under the thin layers of grass covering Mackenzie Hill, the layers of time and memories are striated. Japanese Canadian characters within a Multicultural paradigm are no longer nomads, but they live in the shadow of a hill of waste, and that waste is symbolic of their role as "leftovers" whose memories pile up as refuse of the dominant narrative. Yano identifies "what a waste" (236), it is that Asako tells him of his wife's affair, and Asako relates that comment to what her father used to say about the "scraps of leftovers, when we had so little to begin with" (236). The "scraps" of Asako's failing/unreliable memory fail her and she cannot re-member clearly or admit to herself or to Sachi the role that she played in either catastrophes: Eiji's death or Yano's murder-suicide. Her memories simply pile up as part of the wreckage of history reminiscent of Walter Benjamin's interpretation of Paul Klee's Angelus Novus in "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (1940); Benjamin interprets the painting as the angel of history facing towards a past where one sees a chain of events. The Angelus Novus, instead, sees one catastrophe where the wreckage piles up and hurls itself in front of his feet. This wreckage is much the same as the chain of events that unfold in Japanese Canadian history, culminating in Yano's radical actions, and Asako just watches the wreckage of memories pile up. The unreliability of her own memory is made obvious through Sachi's questioning of the various versions of Asako's stories. While her sense of responsibility for both catastrophes is clear throughout the novel, it is only in the final scenes of the novel that she fully admits to herself (and the reader) her participation in both disasters. Earlier in the novel, she is unable to confess to Yano that she, as a child in the camps, lured her brother Eiji out to the river in the night, where she pretended to drown, so that he would jump in and save her. While they both got out of the river alive, Eiji got a fatal fever from the cold waters:

> I did not tell Yano it was me, selfish, hungering child that I was. It was me wanting the world my way, never to change, ever. It was my fault, all my fault – not the war, not the government, not some hakujin stranger named Mackenzie. (301)

In fact, even just before Sachi's near drowning, Sachi demands to know the true story about Asako's brother's death, which Asako is not yet ready to tell. Finally, Sachi angrily points out that Asako did not save her brother any more than Sachi saved Tam, which is both an accusation and a confession. Then, Sachi reveals to Asako that the murder-suicide is her fault because she took Tam to see his mother with Mr. Spears. Then, Asako finally admits to Sachi what she had not yet been able to admit to herself:

> "It was because of me," I [Asako] at last whispered into the dark. "I told Yano about the woods. About Chisako. I told him."
>
> She wouldn't listen. Now, when I was speaking the truth, what I'd hidden from myself." (277)

Neither character is willing to abdicate responsibility for the events that transpired, because they "know" that they had a hand in the events that transpired.[155] Moreover, it is clear that Asako believes she catalyzed the events, but that she begins to thinks she might be responsible for not stopping the tragedy and her memories become confused as she is talking to Detective Rossi:

> Did I tell him? Did I know he'd bought a gun from Canadian Tire? Had I seen him take it from his trunk, or put it in? Had I seen him lead Tam and Kimi to his navy Pontiac that afternoon? Had I imagined it, dreamed it?
>
> . . . What had I seen? What did I know? What had I done? (238)

Stum, who enters during her conversation with Detective Rossi, recognizes that she is distraught and defends her by offering the fact that Yano had known about his wife's affair for months. After the detective leaves, Asako is shaken and begins crying and calling herself a monster:

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[155] The novel is reminiscent of a tragedy. Sakamoto seemingly alludes to Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author,* a postmodern play that deals with self-reflexivity, detachment, the idea that all stories are equal, and ironic constructions. Each character in this play has an actor who is supposed to perform their story, but it is tragic because they cannot escape the incest-death incident. In the same vein, Asako, Stum, and Sachi all feel guilty for Yano's act, and they are all trapped in a world, like the concentration camp, that they cannot escape from. The act condemns them to stasis; they are waste with no progress.

> I [Asako] sobbed and sobbed. What had I done? A monster, that was what I was, what I'd always been. I could not stop. *No, ne-san, no. He knew, he knew, it wasn't your fault. Asako.* The words drifted down as I sank, a dead weight. I was drowning, drowning; a sensation I knew so well; slipping away, but I would not reach out, not this time.
>
> "Ne-san, stop," Stum was urging. "Please." So calm. "it wasn't you."
>
> His hand on my sleeve. "It was me," he said. "I told him."
>
> I tried to push him away but he stayed put. Stum could not save me. No one could. I would not allow it. I simply nodded at that patch of carpet, pretending to accept his kindness. His lie. (240)

In the end, Asako will not allow anyone else to take the blame for something she clearly believes to be her responsibility. However, Stum confesses his role and Sachi later confesses her role. Each character believes they are responsible for what Yano has done: something that affects all of them and becomes a community tragedy.

Each of the main characters's in *The Electrical Field* feels guilty and plays a role in the execution of Yano's family, Mr. Spears, and Yano himself. The complex dynamic of community makes all of them responsible, but none of them are held accountable by the dominant discourse. The same can be said of the internment.

While Yano is convinced that the hill is named after Prime Minister Mackenzie King (71), Asako knows there was another Mackenzie:

> "You know who they named that for, don't you?" Yano would ask, testing me. "You know who that MacKenzie is, don't you?" Each time I refused to answer, refused his little history lesson, but he kept at me.
>
> "It's not the same Mackenzie," I said.
>
> "There's only one," he said. "It's him all right." I shook my head, then scurried ahead, but he caught up with me. "He put us in the camps, Saito-san. He's the one." (156-7)

Of course, the history of internment in Canada does include two Mackenzies: Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister who legislated internment, and Ian Mackenzie, the B.C. politician elected on a racist platform to rid British Columbia of the Yellow Peril. It was the latter who influenced the former and all the other federal politicians in Ottawa. They were far removed from the realities of the situation in B.C., and while some questioned the claims of Ian Mackenzie, for the most part they acceded to Ian Mackenzie's more intimate knowledge of B.C. socio-cultural dynamics, and the *evacuation* of the Japanese became federal policy. While both Mackenzie's were monstrous racists, and both were complicit in the *evacuation* of the Japanese Canadian community, monuments normally honour historical figures with their last names, and it can therefore reasonably be assumed that Ian Mackenzie is the true namesake of this hill (not Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King), which is, symbolically, a man-made hill built of refuse. That being said, the hill is meant to evoke both historical figures simultaneously, because they worked complicity to achieve the same end: Mackenzie becomes the link between Ian and King.

Monstrosity in the novel, then, extends beyond this little Japanese Canadian community. The characters become an allegory for the larger Japanese Canadian population, but the murder and their role in it, for which they are not held accountable, is an allegory for the role of the dominant discourse, at all levels, for the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* and internment, and for all racist and prejudiced policies that are legislated by the government and find no resistance from the population. Just as Yano wanted to hold Mackenzie accountable, Marlene Goldman in her article "A Dangerous Circuit: Loss and the Boundaries of Racialized Subjectivity in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Kerri Sakamoto's *The Electrical Field*" also points out the important fact that Detective Rossi wants Asako to admit that Yano was a monster, but the reality is that he was "merely following the racist script to its grisly conclusion" (379). However, the murder-suicide is a hybridization of the spectacular American murder-suicide, and the honourable Japanese act of *hara-kiri*, which involves a single individual. Ironically then, just as Yano wanted to blame everything on one man, and to hold Mackenzie accountable for the internment and all associated misfortunes, the dominant power's discourse (Detective Rossi) simplify the events of the murder-suicide, wanting to hold only Yano responsible, when Sachi, Asako, and Stum played a part.

While Sachi and Asako claim their responsibility, Stum does not recognize his own role in Yano's re-action. Stum is portrayed as naïve. At certain moments Asako sees him as a man or as Angel's suitor and she is surprised to see him as anything other than an "overgrown, inarticulate boy, late in learning his own strength" (256). In the end, Stum's lack of willingness to recognize or accept his own responsibility in Yano's actions makes him complicit with the larger discourse that will eradicate him. Stum does not relate to his older sister Asako's sense of responsibility. Instead, he writes Yano off as a kamikaze – a kind of monster/ *homo sacer*. Ultimately, he does what is prescribed to him, when he stereotypes and simplifies Yano's behaviour. In declaring Yano a kamikaze monster, Yano is dehumanized and Stum is able to dismiss any common traits between the two of them. Once Yano becomes Other, Stum has nothing to learn from Yano's reactions, because Stum is "normal." Yano's actions are the ravings of a madman, and since he is crazy, Stum must take no role of responsibility for what Yano has done. In classifying Yano as a kamikaze, Stum vindicates himself and everyone else in the community. Yano, therefore, becomes the scapegoat. The scapegoat offers nothing in terms of cultural lesson. Asako, however, interprets Yano's actions and her own role in a much more wholistic and integrated way:

> "Please, ne-san," Stum pleaded. "Stop this. Please." He bent close, rasped: "The man was a kamikaze." Believing it would heal me, vindicate me to hear this. He clung to the word without knowing what it truly meant. It could only be a picture in his head, as it was in mine: a newspaper cartoon of hideous flying insect-men plummeting in flames. Photographs of Japanese soldiers in magazines, squashed faces, hundreds and hundreds of them, all the same. Not one

> recognizable. Not one Yano. In spite of all I now knew him to be. (259)

Stum does what the dominant discourse does: he uses the power to which he has access in an absolutist manner that does not acknowledge responsibility or ethics.

Ultimately, the most significant influence on Yano's behaviour was the dominant discourse. The rage that builds in Yano, which culminates in his violence, is evidence of the residual impact of internment, and the pressures from the dominant discourse on the Other. It is social pressures that transform Yano's wife into a stereotypical Oriental women, an ideal of "exotic" beauty that can be consumed by the white colonial male, Mr. Spears.

The end of the novel specifically addresses the issue of monstrosity and Otherness. The monster as a narrative construct serves multiple purposes[156] and arises out of varying specific circumstances. However, monsters, in effect, are always a reflection of the *zeitgeist*, the socio-historical moment in the culture out of which they arise, and they mirror that society's fears, desires, and struggles (often political). They can also be used to maintain borders, and define belonging through Otherness. In the case of *The Electrical Field*, the idea of the monster highlights the re-membering necessary to re-narrate a community that has lost its communal body, in other words its sense of identity.

The body is another metaphor used in combination with the theme of self-mutilation, which runs through Sakamoto's writing in two forms: physical transformation of one's identity and shame. Sakamoto's work definitely plays with inscribing the body, and is obviously aware of the theories of Foucault and Kristeva: "For Foucault, the 'body' emerged in the late seventeenth century as the arena in which more local social practices were linked to the larger scale organization of power" (Bell 97). Each character's self-mutilations, whether they are in the form of physical scarring or a physical transformation, are an act of intervention on the body. These self-mutilations are motivated by a great sense of shame, the shame of being Other, and the shame of having been or being Othered. In some cases, Othering is an imposition of stereotypical expectation from individual members of the dominant discourse and/or other ethnic groups; in other cases, it originates from systemic prejudice and human rights abuses in the form of the internment (and less obviously in the present through Multiculturalism).

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[156] Jeffrey Jerome Cohen delineates the various archetypes of the monster in the introduction to the book *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*: the monster's body is a cultural body, the monster always escapes, the monster is the harbinger of category crisis, the monster dwells at the gates of difference, the monster polices the borders of the possible, fear of the monster is really a kind of desire, the monster stands at the threshold.

In *The Electrical Field*, the self-mutilation takes on various forms in the different characters: Yano, Asako, Sachi, and Chisako. Yano's shame leads him to rage against the system and demand redress for historical injustices, and ultimately his rage is turned inward on his family and himself (as well as Mr. Spears, a symbol of the dominant discourse/Canadian power structures that continuously betray him). Asako's emotional self-flagellation leaves her void of emotion: a character of the living dead, who inhabits a tomb, lives in a cage, is a cut flower in the process of dying. Asako tortures herself in an invisible, internalized, emotional way, symbolically killing herself: the living dead. She denies herself a real life. She lives inside the tomb that is her home. She wears the clothes of her dead mother, cares for her dying father, and maintains the closest relationship in her life with her dead brother Eiji. She lives in her own past, and vicariously through her stilted encounters with other Japanese Canadians. The closest she gets to living in the present is by watching life go by her front window. She is frozen in the realm of negative nostalgia. Her home becomes the backstage of the theatre of life, for which the electrical field is the stage. Her most meaningful relationship with a living person is with Yano, someone who also lives in his anger about the past and ends up killing himself and his family because he cannot bear the reality of his present.

Sachi's sense of responsibility intensifies her sense of self-hatred, and the outcome is further acts of self-punishment and self-mutilation; Sachi self-mutilates by behaving dangerously and cutting herself. Asako notices the self-inflicted wounds that mark Sachi's arms:

> I stopped and pulled her arms to me, rougher than I meant to be because I thought she'd resist, and I held out her hands. The criss-cross of scars took my breath away but there was no blood, no fresh cuts. The skin was dark in parts, brown and dull from not healing properly. Her hands looked weathered, old. (41)

She wounds herself to cut through the thin layer like the one covering Mackenzie Hill in order to feel the pain and to unveil the self hidden inside the Japanese Canadian body that traps her. However, her self-flagellation is not limited to cutting herself. She also puts herself in precarious positions, climbing the towers as though she wants to climb out of the existence lived in the confinement of the field. Her father is forced to drag her off her precarious perch on the towers. Sachi also hits herself, and

Asako associates Sachi's self-inflicted punches with the fact that Japanese Canadians feel shameful about their small stature and that of the children's:

> She [Sachi] sat in the passenger seat, her flat shiny forehead rising a little above the dashboard, her eyes darting again. She was small, like Tamio and Kimi. Sitting there, punching her fists on her legs as she watched the streets pass. Chiisai. I saw the curve of Chisako's lips saying it. (30)

Their petite size is something to be ashamed of, because it is something Asian, something Other, something that marginalizes them from power: physical, social, economic, and political. Sachi expresses that in acts of self-hatred and self-mutilation, which are attempts to self-destruct.

Similar to Sachi's cutting, Chisako also performs an intervention on her physical body, by transforming herself according to Orientalist notions of what (not who) she should be. Asako notices that Chisako transforms herself for her white boss:[157]

> Chisako had made herself a beauty. Had grown into one miraculously. She hadn't been one in the beginning. When she first came, she was plain, almost as plain as me. To see her, I didn't feel so badly about myself. Slowly it happened. It wasn't difficult to put your finger on, like some changes. It was little more than a year ago, when she took a part time job. . . . I dared ask if it was a nihonjin she worked for, but "Oh, no, Saito-san," she replied, with a touch of disdain I could not

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[157] Another of Kerri Sakamoto's characters did much the same thing. Ayame in "Walk-In Closet" transformed herself in order to please Ben, the Jewish businessman.

> mistake. Pinning her hair in an upsweep, her black, black hair that had no grey. Dabbing white powder to her face, red lipstick and black eyeliner. At first it seemed too dramatic, to see her standing at the bus stop at noon in our little suburban neighbourhood. But I grew used to it, and the makeup that seemed to float over her features soon melded into them: her skin grew paler, her eyes more slanted and round, her hair a lacquered black. Little by little there were more changes. The hand cupping her mouth when she laughed, the downcast eyes, the dainty steps. I found it irritating, even laughable, in my living-room. But one day I saw her out on the street. She'd stopped to look at something and the way she held her head just so, her bony white neck showing with her coat open, even in winter. Seeing her that time, I thought to myself that she didn't belong here at all. (24-5)

Chisako had made herself beautiful, and Asako noticed the changes slowly. Chisako becomes transformed into a Hollywood stereotype; she prostitutes her own image, becoming a parody of herself. Before Mr. Spears Chisako had been "the ugly duck with her twin ducklings. Her eyes downcast as usual" (480). After Mr. Spears, Asako notices significant changes: "Her skin looked very white that afternoon; her hair, in its elaborate rolls, blacker than usual. She resembled a doll, a doll dropped in the snow, forgotten by its owner" (480). Chisako, who had come to Canada from Japan as the dowdy housewife, was transformed by Canada and Mr. Spears's expectation, into an ideal Japanese beauty: an imitation of a white-faced, red lipped, black lacquer-haired china-doll or geisha girl.

Stum lives in the shadows of internment, and becomes an assimilated Japanese Canadian, who does not understand his own complicity in maintaining the status quo. His self-destructive acts are more symbolically performed through the killing of the chicks. However, the symbolism of the chicks at the end of the novel subtly hits at self-erasure. Stum, as a man and a participant in the patriarchy if not class or race hierarchies, is able to carry on with his life, emotionally unaffected by his role in Yano's actions, all the while carrying out the erasure of Otherness at the hatchery. Stum and Angel take Asako to see the chicks at the hatchery. Sakamoto's chicks are an intertextual reference to the novel *Obasan*. In Kogawa's novel, *Obasan,* the scene with the chicks comes just before Naomi's molestation by Old Man Gower is revealed: an issue that speaks to power dynamics (including racial and gender). In Gary Willis's article "Speaking the Silence: Joy Kogawa's *Obasan,*" he interprets the scene with the chicks in *Obasan* as an allegory for the relationship between the dominant discourse and ethno-cultural citizens (specifically Japanese Canadians):

> One of the most important scenes in the novel again involves chickens. As a small child, Naomi puts some yellow chicks her parents have purchased into a cage with a white hen: to her horror, the hen starts pecking them to death. Such a scene can easily be allegorized: Canada is a sort of white "mother hen" that turned on some "yellow chicks," the Japanese residents who seemed to form a "Yellow Peril." But to see the scene as simply racial allegory is to miss its deeper significance: the hen's behaviour suggests that in all animals there

> exists, alongside an impulse to nurture, an opposite impulse, to destroy. The xenophobia of white Canadians after Pearl Harbor can be attacked by typewritten letters; but Naomi becomes aware that this xenophobia is part of a problem much larger and deeper: nature, the nature that all creatures share, seems mixed. (244)

Read intertextually, Stum is a chick himself. At the hatchery, Stum teaches Angel to kill the chicks that are hermaphroditic – a metaphor for being both Canadian and Japanese/ethnic minority, perhaps? – and Stum's role resonates of the Jewish kapo who is complicit with the monster power structures that eliminate those who do not conform. These rare chicks run the risk of being killed from the inside, but also from the outside by the dominant discourse and their own ethno-cultural group. The motivation for the kapo comes from without. The monster generates monsters. Furthermore, the idea of contemporary monstrosities (i.e. Yano's violent act, and the killing of the hermaphroditic chicks) is superimposed on the monstrous history of internment. There is a warning buried in the novel's final pages, but at the same time it does remain open-ended. More than one possible future is imaginable. There is no definite answer about the direction and role Asako will take after the novel ends. However, the direct intertextual reference to one of the most well-recognized images and symbols in *Obasan* – the white mother-hen pecking the little yellow chicks to death, as well as the bird symbolism that pervades the novel in general – make it blatant that Sakamoto is rewriting the silence and trauma that are the lived post-war reality in 1975 before redress and re-membering are pervasive. However, the ending of this novel is more a warning to Japanese Canadian and ethno-cultural readers in a way that *Obasan* is not. While the threat in *Obasan* was the oppression of the yellow-chick (Japanese Canadians) by the white mother-hen (white Canadian power), in *The Electrical Field*, the fear is that Japanese Canadians (and other ethnocultural Canadians such as Angel) have been recuperated by Multiculturalism to maintain the status quo of white power.

The theme of mutilation, as an act of intervention on the body, whether it be through a physical transformation of image or scarring as a result of wounding, is closely associated with two other themes that run through Sakamoto's body of work: physical transformation of one's identity, and shame. The ethnic body is always marked by its own visibility and physicality: hair colour, eye colour, skin colour, bone structure, accented speech. It has become a popular trend in plastic surgery, for Asian women and men to have their eyelids transformed to look more "white": The medical term is Asian blepharoplasty. Sakamoto's characters are also prone to reconfigure the semiotics of the body. Some of the characters wound and scar themselves (Nobuo and Sachi), others carry the physical scars of history on them (Miyo), and others transform their physicality by costuming and masking themselves as a reaction to the demands of the dominant discourse (Ayame and Chisako).

In "Walk-In Closet" both Nobuo and his mother transform themselves through self-mutilation and physical make-over respectively. Nobuo's acne scars are "small purplish dents left, just the size I [Nobuo] can rest my fingertips in. My mother says I've made the scars even bigger" (Sakamoto, "Closet" 407). Nobuo, who scratches at himself, does so only to the eventual end of giving himself dark purplish scars. Nobuo's scars are directly linked to his ethnicity and the colour of his skin. They make him even darker, and it is not clear whether people wince at him/his complexion, because he has dark "ethnic" skin, or because he has scars; they have become intrinsically linked.

Essentially, he makes himself more Other, his skin now not only darker that the white skin of power, but purple – he has now become the alien Other. His ethnicity is also something "dirty." He thinks to himself: "My skin's darkened from the scarring, and it's always slick with oil. When I arrive home, my mother soaks a large cotton ball with rubbing alcohol and drags it down my face in rows, she'd like to strip the skin right off. She drops the grey-brown wad into her powder-white palm and shakes her head at me" (407-8). His mother would like to wipe away the dirt that colours his skin; in fact, she would happily wipe away the visible ethnicity that she has passed onto him. His colour shames her, reminding her of her own ethnicity, and she would like to wipe away her own ethnicity, which she has passed on to him. Her discomfort with her own ethno-cultural identity manifests itself as dissatisfaction with her son; he feels as though he can never please her or live up to her expectations. She hates in him the very ethno-cultural signifiers that make him her child.

Nobuo's mother, Ayame, remakes her image originally as an assimilated Asian woman with impeccable western taste, modelling herself after a Rossdale matron who had previously employed her as a domestic, and after the images in *Vogue* magazine. Later, she remakes herself into the image of an exotic Asian female (a geisha) for the Jewish businessman Ben, who had lived in Tokyo. Ayame's character is a criticism of the postmodern condition where life becomes an imitation of art, and art is no longer an imitation of life. Ayame non-critically and indiscriminately trades in one stereotyped identity for another; however, neither adopted representation of her identity is an authentic expression of her humanity. Sakamoto is implicitly critical of capitalism and the masks of capitalism that allow individuals to shop for identities. Instead, ethnicity becomes a tradable commodity both for the media markets selling those images and for Ayame who buys into certain images and stereotypes and then uses them to sell herself to her employer and/or the various men in her life.

The motif of self-mutilation appears in other of Sakamoto's works. In her film *Strawberry Fields*, the protagonist, Irene, is a pyromaniac who burns herself when she feels rejected by her mother. It is her friend, Aura the social activist who knows the history of Japanese American internment, however, who tells Irene to let go of her mother, thereby releasing her from her self-destructive behaviour. Here, the idea of self-mutilation is associated with the mother, just as it was in "Walk-In Closet" and just as it is in *One Hundred Million Hearts*. This relationship between self-love/hate and the mother is symbolic of one's relationship to their mother-tongue, and mother-culture.

f) *One Hundred Million Hearts* (2003)

In *One Hundred Million Hearts*, Miyo discovers, quite by accident, the origins of her physical disfigurement. It is not a disfigurement that she causes herself, but it is the product of her parents' history and choices, and it is, therefore, one of the reasons that Masao feels so duty-bound to care for Miyo. The transformations to her pre-natal body are the marks of history on her body. What is even more noteworthy, is that Miyo, as a Japanese Canadian (the emphasis being on Canadian) does not have the historical awareness to identify the semiotics of her ancestral history, written on her physical body. In other words, what is obvious to her Japanese peers is that her mother was in Hiroshima at the time of the atomic bombing. Miyo bears the scars of war and the markings of her ethnicity, both through her healthy physicality, and through her handicaps: one side of her body (half of her) is smaller and weaker than the other half. This is reminiscent of Stephen in *Obasan*, who has a limp. His body signifies that he cannot, as a Japanese Canadian, reconcile his two halves. His body is a semiotic of historical fracture and disjuncture.

Miyo, the protagonist of *One Hundred Millions Hearts* lives in an a-historical era and an a-historical Canadian nation that forgets its own origins – forgetting that except for the First Nations Peoples, Canada is a land of immigrants – and then re-imagines itself through a national literary canon *à la* Margaret Atwood that identifies the non-dominant ethno-cultural groups as transient visitors, as opposed to the dominant ethno-cultural groups who are narrated as the founding “fathers”. This myth was legitimized through the Trudeau era politics that legislated French and English as the two official languages in a Multicultural country with no official culture. Miyo believes that Rinzo has mistakenly read the semiotics of her body: “He'd assumed she was one who'd suffered radiation sickness, rooted in her mother's body, sprouted in her. That word he'd uttered: *hibakusha*, like a taint or taboo; the momentary recoil of his fingertips” (164). Then, Miyo suddenly begins to question if the secrets surrounding her mother’s death, had been hidden in plain view, on her own body? Miyo asks herself if radiation poisoning had “been her affliction all along, and she’d never been told? Was that what her mother had died of? All the mysteries of her life that she'd let lie; that she'd never prodded her father to tell. Now who would tell her?" (164). She also questions whether there is anyone left now to tell her the truth about her past. The past becomes something that she collages together, much in the same way her sister Hana creates the mural collage of the kamikaze pilots, in an effort to understand their actions.

Sakamoto's latest novel, *One Hundred Million Hearts*, is an innovative take on internment and the events of the Second World War. Beyond merely reiterating *evacuation*, *re-membering*, and *redress*, Sakamoto raises taboo issues surrounding the wartime loyalties of nisei characters, which render the community with greater complexity. Published in October 2003, this novel introduces new identities to add to the pantheon of Japanese Canadian figures in literature and film who debunk the myth of community homogeneity and help to narrate a more nuanced Japanese Canadian identity that evades simplistic stereotyping and categorization. Sakamoto presents these new characters within the historical context of the Canadian post-redress and post-September 11, 2001. Illustrating the complexities of dual loyalties and government actions on individual characters, Sakamoto presents a story that adds to the understanding of political choices in the private sphere and adds significance to the Japanese Canadian story of *evacuation* not as a story of victimization, or success as it is measured in a capitalist system, but as a paradigm through which to give pause to the post-September-eleventh rhetoric of "us and them" and "terrorist," as the new term for Enemy Alien and/or Yellow Peril.

This narrative is possible in 2003, because the victimization of Japanese Canadians has already been made clear through decades of narration. Sakamoto re-introduces the notion that in a very heterogeneous wartime Japanese Canadian community some Japanese Canadians were loyal to Japan and to the Emperor. Some other texts had hinted at these issues, but no writer or filmmaker before Sakamoto explores these ideas as explicitly or to the same extent. For example, Anne Wheeler's *The War Between Us* includes a scene in which several old ladies in the public bath reveal their loyalty to Japan. It is not illegal, after all, to be loyal to the emperor. It does, however, create suspicion and foster fear that loyalty to the emperor might manifest itself as disloyal action against Canada. However, Sakamoto's characterizations of Miyo, Miyo's father, and Setsuko also emphasizes that the contemporary Japanese Canadian community is heterogeneous.

In the novel, Masao, Miyo's father, is a Canadian nisei who left Canada for "Manchukuo"/ Manchuria to serve the emperor of Japan as a kamikaze pilot. His life is complicated by the fact that, not having completed a kamikaze mission, he returns to Canada after the war with his war bride, Miyo's mother. She is a hibakusha: someone who lived in Hiroshima or Nagasaki and was affected by the atomic explosion. Apparently the mother demonstrated no visible signs of sickness, but was ill and died giving birth to Miyo, who was physically deformed inside and out. Another character, Buddy from Vancouver, was also a kamikaze during the War, but unlike Masao Buddy remained in Japan after the war, hiding his ability to speak English, and his identity as a Canadian. Unlike Masao he does not go "home" where "he belongs."

Sakamoto raises the issues of belonging and home, making her position clear: home for a Japanese Canadian always remains Canada (even after years of denying it like Buddy does)[158] and Japanese people are those who are born and raised in Japan. However, Sakamoto is very adept at illustrating that both countries are xenophobic and that in either place the one who does not belong suffers. And a nisei belongs nowhere. They are ostracized in Canada and in Japan. Masao, Miyo's father, spends his life protecting his handicapped daughter from the jeering bullies of the playground. Whether the children bully her because she is Japanese Canadian or because she is handicapped is unclear, but the father responds by calling them mutts. Thereby the implication is that his blood and Miyo's blood is pure: "When the boys in the playground jeered at me, he chased them off with a branch and called them mutts. He protected me, and I learned. 'Think you're prettier?' he yelled at them. 'Go home!'" (7). However, it is clear that the other Japanese Canadians pity her because the time her father spent in Japan is evident in Miyo's deformities (*hibakusha* mother) and other Japanese Canadians are able to identify the traces of history on her body: "When she was alone and still young they smiled kindly, as if the smile wasn't just for her but entrusted for her father, and it felt like charity or, worse, pity" (28). Despite, or perhaps because of their pity, Miyo's father shuns the Japanese Canadian neighbour couple. "Once they came to the door, but he refused to answer. *I'm not one of them*, he said, and she [Miyo] peeked out the window after they'd left" (28).

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[158] After decades of living in Japan, Buddy, refers to Powell Street in Vancouver as "Back home". The entire quote is this: "It (Manchuria) was paradise. Where else would you see a white man carrying a yellow skibby's bags, or the skibby telling him what floor he wanted in a hotel elevator? And they were all Nikkei – no matter where you came from, where you were born, you were just as good as Japanese from Japan. World-class citizens with streetcars to ride, roomy, reserved for Japanese only. You were a man one time in your life. Back home, *yellow skibby*, someone once called him on the street. It was forever one ugly name or another, even in the neighborhood around Powell Street. Yellow skibby stuck, no escaping it" (139).

He feels himself to be an outsider in relationship to other Japanese Canadians, and knows that they will consider him to be a traitor, if they discover his past. He knows, based on his experiences in Japan, that Japanese people can be as cruel as white people. The novel reveals that in wartime Japan, if someone was discovered to be a nisei, they were beaten and ostracized for being foreign-born. It was assumed that foreign-born Japanese could not be as loyal to the emperor as "true" Japanese. Interestingly, these in-between characters end up trying to forge an in-between space that is neither Canada nor the ethno-cultural space, but rather something else. It is an elastic space that is not defined by the Multicultural paradigm and this third space is a position by which to verify the differences. Therefore, Japanese Canadians are believed to be unable to be loyal to Canada because of the colour of their skin and those same Japanese Canadians are believed to be unable to revere the Emperor because of their land of birth, even in a country like Japan where blood ties are highly valued. It is, after all, a land where the Emperor's right to rule comes from the belief that that he is a direct descendant of the gods.[159] This deterritorialized belonging is one of the ironies exposed throughout the course of the novel. Therefore, Japanese Canadians are out of place in either country: positive liminality. It is a "positive" liminality because it is not merely a state of limbo that disempowers the liminal citizen from participating, but it is also a liminality that can provide a critical space and a distance from the issues of identity-construction that allows Japanese

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[159] According to Japanese mythology, Japan's first emperor, Emperor Jimmu enthroned in 660 BC, is believed to be a descendant of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. Until the end of the Second-World-War, the prevailing Japanese belief was that emperors are the direct descendants of the gods. To this day, Japanese mythology claims that the country's emperors have descended from the same imperial family for the last 1500 years. Therefore, it was a great shock to the nation when, by command of the U.S., the Emperor had to renounce his status as a descendant of the gods.

Canadians, possessing critical tools of analysis, access to the power dynamics of identity formulation. This third space allows a critical consideration about how identities are socially constructed. Thus, identities can be appropriated in a ludic process giving agency back to the subject.

In an attempt to save her daughter from the ambiguity of being a Japanese Canadian, Setsuko leaves her and Masao's daughter Hana to be raised in Japan. Setsuko, Masao's second wife, is a nisei survivor of the *evacuation*. She understands first-hand that a Japanese Canadian is destined never to belong in either Canada or Japan: "'Canada didn't want us.' Setsuko seemed lost for a moment, . . . 'Japan wasn't any better. We had to hide our Canadian accents and pretend we were born here'" (52). In an effort to save her daughter from what she suffered as a Japanese Canadian youth, she passes on another of her traumas. Hana becomes an orphan in Japan, just as Setsuko was an orphan in the camps. Miyo questions Setsuko about how she could have done this to her daughter: "'But you left your daughter here,' Miyo said. *An orphan like you*, she almost said" (52). Nevertheless, Setsuko chose to leave Hana in Japan in an attempt to give her daughter the one thing she never had as a nisei, a sense of belonging. She does not want her daughter to be lost between the two identities of Japanese and Canadian.

However, Hana cannot escape her family past, and where she repeats certain aspects of her mother's life, she becomes obsessed with uncovering the truth about her Canadian nisei father. She is convinced that he committed war crimes as a kamikaze pilot. She spends her time with the war-widows of the kamikaze soldiers, prowling Yasukuni park, the memorial to the Kamikaze, and collecting pictures of the

Kamikaze soldiers and mounting them into a collage of cherry blossoms that she is painting on her walls. She reconstructs *a* past, through art, which strings traces and images of the past together in a puzzle whose pieces do not fit together. She cannot get to the truth. As "Hana likes to say, 'There can't be peace without truth'" (181). Nor can there be honour.

Hana's character and her motto bring to mind the work of Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin, and Angelo Principe in their 2000 publication entitled *Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad.* They present a more complex version of the internment, pointing out that some Italian Canadian men were fascist sympathizers. Whether the Italian Canadian or Japanese Canadian internees were actually a national threat is not for us to surmise. However, Iacovetta and Ventresca eloquently state that it is important to present a complex story/history. They point out that the leaders of the community, who have authored the internment both historically and through literature and film [ex: Bagnall's *Canadese* and Zavaglia's *Barbed Wire and Mandolins*], have painted the entire community with the same brush of victimization:

> A language of shame (*vergogna*) has informed the redress campaign and community discussions of Italian-Canadian internment. We are reminded of the humiliation suffered by that generation of Italians, an entirely convincing point. . . .Italian Canadians, rather than being fed a streamlined version of the past meant to serve contemporary political ends, deserve full disclosure of all the evidence and interpretations so far available. They can then decide for themselves, through informed

> reflection and debate, how best to understand the dramatic events of these years. To expect less is shameful. (405)

Members of minority groups are seen as they are narrated by their leaders, whether they have chosen those representatives or not. Meanwhile, the members of the dominant (dominant-minorities) are seen as individuals. The dominant group is afforded a heterogeneous identity. The authors of *Enemies Within* reiterate that people, Italian Canadians as well as the greater Canadian community, recognize that within the Second-World-War Italian Canadian community, many (hundreds of) Italian Canadian men were innocent of any acts of treason and were interned without due process of law. However, these authors also highlight the complexities of the period, including the fact that some Italian Canadians were proud of the rising status of Mussolini's Italy, and others were known to be sympathetic to fascist ideology. What these academics are asking is that Italian Canadians be seen as a complex group of individuals; in the case of internment some were fascist sympathizers, other were not. Likewise, present-day Italian Canadians also have varying politics, religions, and socio-economic standing. They are a heterogeneous group that defy stereotype. Sakamoto is daring to do the same through her novel. She is daring to present one version of yet another element of the Japanese Canadian wartime community, and with it comes a very diverse set of contemporary characters who are there both to reveal the mysteries of the past as well as to present their own complexity and diversity as members of a presently heterogeneous community, which might explain the lukewarm reception of the book. While some critics have given it great reviews (like Peter Gordon in the Asian Review of Books on the Web), others have not.

Laura M. Miller writes that the protagonist is "not likeable" and says she wants to "shake her and send her to counselling." She gives the book harsh criticism, and the conclusion of the review reads:

> The title refers to the war slogan: one hundred million hearts beating as one (and that one is the Emperor). If you ever wondered how or why a culture would embrace and encourage suicide missions and glorify those who die for their cause (sound familiar?), then this is a novel for you. I predict this book will be on Women's Studies course lists and in remainder bins of countless stores across the continent.

The parentheses are Miller's and are obviously meant to be a sideways, ironic comment to the reader. A snide comment from the dominant discourse to the dominant discourse referring to you know who: the dislikeable protagonist in the midst of the present Canadian political landscape, the Other, the Muslim/terrorist. So, what Miller does, is draw the line between the Second-World-War Enemy Alien and the present day "Person of Interest." While some critics are able to appreciate Sakamoto's complex understanding of two cultures that mingle and intersect, rendering complexities that need attention in Canadian literature, other critics are disturbed when the Japanese Canadian protagonist is anything other than a victim of past injustice who has overcome the hardships of immigration and prejudice to assimilate. Sakamoto's latest book exposes certain taboos that make people uncomfortable and challenge the position of Japanese Canadian as a model minority. It resists the imposition of discourses of identity because self-analysis means that categories of social control become ineffectual, and power is redistributed.

Sakamoto's novel, *One Hundred Million Hearts* is a response to the most significant issue imbedded in the Japanese Canadian literary and cinematic corpus: the fear of invisibility and the danger of being recuperated by the dominant discourse. Japanese Canadians are struggling against the paradoxes inherent in any taboo. Japanese Canadians are in a constant struggle against recuperation by the Multicultural narrative either through *exclusion* as Enemy/Other/Outsider/Ethnic or through *inclusion* as model minority citizen. R. Miki says:

> The potential for any given minority identity formation – "Japanese Canadian" for instance – to empower the subject is always in danger of the subject being taken hostage, "reproducing thereby the confine-and-conquer patter of dominance dear to the classic imperial quest" ("An Acoustic Journey" 7). The challenge, then, is to engage a poetics which takes on the burden of social struggle and still attends to creative acts which begin (not merely end) at the boundary lines. (199)

It is this social struggle that Sakamoto has taken on. *One Hundred Million Hearts* artistically addresses what Iacovetta and Perin were calling for in their criticism – a more complete understanding of the wartime climate in the ethno-cultural Canadian communities as well as the injustices with which they were handed. When Canadian history paints Japanese Canadians as merely victims of the Second World War *evacuation*, there is little possibility to understand the complexity of the events that might allow the Canadian population to learn from history and fulfill, what Prime Minister Brian Mulroney called, the "solemn commitment and undertaking to Canadians of every origin that such violations well never again in this country be countenanced or repeated" (A. Miki 17). People fail to see that the *evacuation* of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War was not an aberration of Canadian history. It is assumed that because Japanese Canadians were unfairly victimized by historical government legislation that their innocence was evident, making it a clearly unjust action. However, the situation then was much more complicated that it has been represented to be. Innocence does not unequivocally equate to absolute loyalty to Canada. In some cases there was a sense of dual loyalty to Canada and to Japan, the country of residence and of birth. It was not and is not a crime to disagree with the government of Canada and its politics. However, it was against the law to be detained without any due process of law, until that law was suspended. Now it is illegal to be a terrorist. and "suspicion of terrorism" means that Canadian residents can be persecuted with Security Certificates, but without proof. During the Second World War people were interned for years with no proof, just as several men in post-September 11 Canada are being detained without any charges against them.

Sakamoto's novel *One Hundred Million Hearts* illustrates the complexities of loyalty to country, to ethno-cultural group, to family, to partner, and to oneself. The novel explores the human emotions that bind us and divide us, and the author has created more answers than questions. Most importantly she has made people uncomfortable and pushed them to question simple, easy, acceptable safe stereotypes that, while creating an illusion of safety, are the real dangers. This novel is a product of its time. Japanese Canadians are established enough, after redress, for Sakamoto to build on the narrations that have come before this, and to render the complexities of wartime loyalties, and create a political narrative that goes beyond the confines of the "internment" narrative and the boundaries of nation. The reception of this book is a reflection, not of the author's skill, but of society's fear of hearing what these complexities mean at this political juncture. Where the author has attempted to innovate the story of Japanese Canadians and to broaden it beyond merely wartime pawns in the government's exercise of political and economic control, Sakamoto's text will fail to have an impact, only as a result of restricted interpretations of the novel that identify the characters as Enemy Alien when they are actually the outcasts[160] of society. While artistic innovations are necessary, they can have no lasting impact without innovation in the criticism that contextualizes them and either allows for the creation of a third space or confines them to the binary project of inclusion-exclusion necessary to the sustenance of Multiculturalism.

Sakamoto's writing re-collects the events of the era of *re-membering* (1970s and 80s) from a *post-redress* perspective that challenges assumptions about Japanese Canadian identities, Japanese Canadian narratives, and Japanese Canadian futures. Her stories are written over the palimpsest of *Obasan,* giving intertextual signals and acknowledgement to the power and importance of that first novel on Japanese Canadian *evacuation*, while at the same time calling the reader to reassess the position of ethno-cultural communities in a Multicultural Canada. Sakamoto challenges the narratives which represent injustice as an historical transgression that hold no concern in the present, despite the dramatically altered laws that govern individual freedoms and security post-September 11. Just as injustice is narrated as historical, so too is ethnicity. Furthermore, she complicates the wartime narrative of Japanese Canadian history by expanding their horizons. Where *Obasan*'s innovation was the narration of the post-war impacts of *evacuation*, extending the narrative of the Second World War beyond the temporal boundaries of 1945 and the diaspora of Japanese Canadians east of the Rockies or to Japan, Sakamoto's short stories and her novel *The Electrical Field* expand the narrative of residual traumas that haunt the victims of human rights abuses, affecting their relationship with their ethno-cultural identity; *One Hundred Million Hearts* extends the *evacuation* narrative beyond the geographical borders of the Canadian nation, explicitly examining the relationship of Japanese Canadians to Japan and to Canada during and after the war. Sakamoto challenges the versions of *re-membering* that exist, defies forgetting again,[161] and dares invention. In all of her stories, films,[162] and plays Sakamoto explores the experience of re-membering and reinventing family story. In Sakamoto's texts there are no scapegoats, just fallible human characters that challenge the reader to like them or dislike them. Either way these characters demand that the reader question why the characters become so unhappy and unlikeable. The answers are often uncomfortable for those who unquestioningly accept Multicultural propaganda, and are not open to the contradictory nature of including certain citizens into the state through a process of exclusion: by defining them as minor, marginal, ethno-cultural, and therefore not unqualifiedly part of the Canadian social landscape.

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[160] This is a reference to Zygmunt Bauman's book *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts,* wherein he argues that the forces of modernity, like Multiculturalism, are focused on *inclusion* and *exclusion:*

> The old Big Brother was preoccupied with *inclusion* – integration, getting people into line and keeping them there. The new Big Brother's concern is *exclusion* – spotting the people who 'do not fit' into the place they are in, banishing them from that place and deporting them 'where they belong', or better still never allowing them to come anywhere near in the first place. . . .The inhuman cruelty of the first supports the devilish duplicity of the second. That is, as long as the only choice offered by the world we weave daily out of out life pursuits and in which our lives are woven is the warden-ships of the first or the second of the two Big Brothers jointly presiding over the game of obligatory inclusion and compulsory exclusion. (132-3)

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[161] In the cycle of the Japanese Canadian relationship to the dominant discourse this seems to be the inevitable next step, since Japanese Canadians are not presently defying the state (as they were during the Second World War or during the redress campaign), so the Japanese Canadian identity is once again that of "model citizen," causing it to be in danger of *oblivio*.

[162] Her films were not discussed at any great length in this chapter. However, she has written the screenplay for *My Niagara* and *Strawberry Fields*. The first is concerned primarily with issues of sansei identity, and the second is focused specifically on the protagonists search for her familial relationship to Japanese American internment.

Conclusion

Film and literature from the mainstream media and by Japanese Canadians over the decades have narrated a Japanese Canadian identity that has transformed many times in relationship to the socio-political dynamics of the varying decades. During the first half of the twentieth century, Japanese Canadian pioneers were establishing themselves as fishermen, farmers, and businessmen. During the early years, they were rarely part of the discourse of nation-building, but were instead considered transient immigrants who would eventually return "home" to Japan. As the Yellow Peril, they were economically and politically repressed. They were kept economically subservient, and received lower wages than their white counterparts. Politically, legislation restricted immigration from Japan during specific periods, and denied them the rights of naturalization and citizenship, most notably the right to a political voice via the franchise at the community/municipal,[163] provincial, and federal levels. The racist legislation of the Second World War era that resulted in the *evacuation* of the Japanese Canadian population away from the West Coast was not an aberration of government policy and its treatment of ethno-cultural groups, nor was the prejudice that predicated those legislations an anomaly. Rather, the wartime events were the climax of racist legislative action and attitudes at the private and public, provincial and federal levels of Canada.

The history of the Second-World-War displacement of the Japanese Canadian population away from the B.C. coast during and after the war has often been narrated as an "internment" story. The reasons for this are multiple, and the notion of an

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[163] At the community level, they were not even allowed to vote for or become school board trustees.

"internment" narrative has been generated by both Japanese Canadians and by the mainstream media through literature, film, and the criticism that surrounds those texts. In Guy Beauregard's 2001 article "After Obasan: Kogawa criticism and its futures," he points out that there have been several reasons for framing the discourse of Japanese Canadian history around the wartime era. The first is *Obasan* and its criticisms. However, historiography written by Japanese Canadian authors has also framed history around the events of the *evacuation*, despite the fact that there are other racist historical events that precede and post-date the Second World War. Beauregard points out that while Sunahara's *Politics* states that prejudice towards Japanese Canadians did not begin with the Second World War, she does begin her historical narrative with the events of early 1942; R. Miki too, has stated that the mass uprooting is the single most important event in Japanese Canadian history, akin to BC and AD. However, Beauregard also rightly points out that

> The emphasis Sunahara and Miki place on the events that began with the uprooting had obvious strategic value for the National Association of Japanese Canadians as it pushed for a negotiated redress settlement with the federal government. But curiously -- and in my [Guy Beauregard's] opinion disturbingly -- the particular narratives used strategically in Japanese Canadian historiography to confront the racism of the Canadian state have been adopted and adapted by literary critics to contain the implications of the history of anti-Japanese racism in Canada by characterizing the events of the 1940s as an isolated aberration. (12)

The adoption and adaptation of the Japanese Canadian experience of *evacuation* by the mainstream media is often formulated around "internment," which disregards the multiple wartime experiences encompassed by the term *evacuation.* The term *evacuation* was first used by the Canadian government to suggest that the displacement of 22,000 Japanese Canadians was a protective measure for the community, but that term has been since recuperated by Japanese Canadians and it encompasses all of what transpired during the war: relocation, family separation, T.B. sanatoriums, incarceration, road camps, beet farms, liquidation of property, post-war diaspora and relocation, deportation to Japan, and internment. A focus on internment is a simplified recuperation of the wartime experience that makes it easily possible for the mainstream to absorb a complex history into the national narrative as an historical injustice, an aberration resulting from the irrationality of wartime.

Internment is an ideal paradigm for the recuperation of history, because the mass uprooting created a displacement, which re-enacts a form of controlled nomadism. Within a nationalist model nomadism must be contained because displacement allows for multiple identities, which can be positive on a personal level – just as theoretical multiculturalism is positive – but which (like Multiculturalism) can become a threat to contained identities, which are necessary in order to create solid national identities. Nationalities are contrived to constrict people into roles and identities that are manageable, and internment is the ultimate containment. Internment, as the eye of the cyclone of displacement created by government policy, allows for a classification, but in containing the story of internment, becomes sterilized such that nothing can be learned from the wartime experiences as they are reduced to something that the national narrative can easily absorb as a historical transgression. The disjuncture upon which a population's disregard for its country's potential to re-enact present and future injustice is predicated on myths of nation that de-politicize and pacify the audience. Japanese Canadian history has been consistently marked with prejudice that climaxed, but did not end, in the events of the Second World War. The narratives contain historical injustice by juxtaposing the historical contexts of intolerance with the contemporary national myth of Multiculturalism that assures Canadians of their own benevolence.

Narratives that focus on *evacuation* (predominantly internment) have been invoked by both the mainstream and Japanese Canadians, with differing political agendas. The emphasis in -- *of Japanese Descent* is the internment camp, and by extension the road camp and the T.B. sanatorium. The political agenda of that film is to propagate to the Canadian population the benefits of the *evacuation,* and to dissociate the Canadian "concentration camps" from the European death camps that were becoming public knowledge. A quarter of a century later in "Exodus of the Japanese," Pierre Berton begins his narrative of Japanese Canadian history with "On December 7, 1941" (Patton 7) and ends, the program with confessions of national guilt excused by wartime fears and the nations historical ignorance before the era of Multiculturalism. His narration frames Japanese Canadians as model minority citizens who have forgiven government transgressions in a desire to assimilate. Berton's narrative too focuses on the events of 1942 as one of the most significant moments in the history of Japanese Canadians and in doing so erases the residual impacts of the multi-layered history of displacement Japanese Canadians have undergone from Japan to Canada, to the interior of B.C., and east of the Rockies (or back to Japan):

> Later, much later, many Japanese Canadians came to feel that the results of the evacuation were not wholly unfortunate. Cruel as it was at the time, the dispersal of the Japanese across thousands of miles forced them into the mainstream of Canadian life. . . .For the Japanese in Canada, the exodus of 1942 changed the course of history for better, for worse, and forever.
>
> For all Canadians, it was a bitter reminder that we carry seeds of envy and contempt that grow swiftly whenever we are too frightened to be fair. (Patton 42-4)

Written in the 1970s, when national policy would still allow for the political abuses of power, Pierre Berton erases those complexities by calling for ethical vigilance with disregard for the legislative reality. Berton's narrative, told within the context of Trudeau's Multiculturalism, heralds that policy as ethical progress which will somehow guarantee what other government policies did not. He says: "Recognizing this as monstrous insanity, we still allowed our racial prejudice to dictate national policy" (Patton 44). The racial prejudice of the past dictated national policy, and in contrast the Multiculturalism Policy created a national myth of equality and justice.

In that same decade the NFB produces *Enemy Alien* using the story of Mrs. Horiouchi to frame the *evacuation* as a national transgression. The framing devices of that film focus predominantly focused on Mrs. Horiouchi's internment, and her return to the site of internment becomes proof that she has overcome the trauma of the original displacement. Canadians can therefore conclude from the narrative that Mrs. Horiouchi's stoic acceptance of the past gives permission for the nation to feel appropriately sympathetic. However, the film makes no call to action despite the fact that by 1975, when this film was released, Pierre Trudeau had invoked the War Measures Act just a few years earlier during the October Crisis, and the viewers at that time would have been cognizant of the fragility of their human rights. That film recounts history in a way that does not date itself, and it remains readily available for purchase through the NFB and in libraries, "educating" young Canadians about the ability of ethno-cultural citizens in Canada to overcome hardship and thrive economically in the face of prejudice. While it is too late for Mrs. Horiouchi, her descendants are able to thrive in Canada, and the narrative emphasizes that while it is tragic, the triumph must be celebrated: "It is important that the long story of frustration and injustice, mistrust and hate, and eventual triumph should be remembered" (*Enemy Alien*). The frame narrative contains Mrs. Horiouchi's life experiences and suffering through an internment narrative that dissipates the post internment suffering of Mrs. Horiouchi, all Japanese Canadians by proxy, and assures the 1975 viewers that those Canadians who have recently had their rights infringed upon will also "triumph."

The containment of the "internment" narrative by the dominant discourse in 1945 distanced Canadian "internment" from Nazi internment practices used a several segments of the European population. Then, the *evacuation* narratives of the 1970s served the political agendas of Trudeau's Multicultural agenda, reassuring Canadians of the disjuncture between historical governments and contemporary government, and reiterating the national myth of justice for all in a Multicultural society that was the result of ethical social progress. Then, that same framing was taken up by Japanese Canadian writers for a difficult political purpose: redress. Sunahara and R. Miki also focused on the mass uprooting of Japanese Canadians to frame the history of Japanese Canadians as a strategic approach to the issue of redress at a specific socio-political moment. What is interesting is that the best example of containment comes, not from the 1945 propaganda film or the NFB documentary of the mid-1970s (both of which acknowledge to varying degrees the precursors and the aftermath of the *evacuation*) but from the 1995 feature film *The War Between Us*, which begins with Pearl Harbour and ends with the deportation of the Kawashimas. The film does not represent the events that predicate the racist government legislation that allow for *evacuation*, and it diminishes the suffering of the community by optimistically focusing on the transformation of the Kawashima and Parnam families, who overcome their prejudices towards one another and eventually become family to one another through marriage. The Multicultural agenda is blatant.

The polemics of narratives that begin with Pearl Harbour and end with the wartime relocation of Japanese Canadians east of the Rockies or to Japan is they create a false narrative conclusion at another crucial moment: the second relocation, the diaspora. Narrations of "internment" that end when the wartime narrative ends for the political nation, do not acknowledge the long-term repercussions of war on ethno-cultural residents and citizens of the nation who had to struggle to re-establish their families after wartime and post-war legislation attempted to erase their existence.[164] Mainstream narrations that contain the wartime narrative using the "internment" paradigm allow minimal critical space to understand the ripple of difficulties suffered by Japanese Canadians in the post-war era. Watching documentaries and reading about the "outcome" of the internment at the end of the war – the deportation and dispersal –viewers and readers are trained to sympathize passively with the hardships of Japanese Canadians who have thrived and become model minority citizens despite the unjust treatment legislated by historical governments (not clearly identified as specific people); these narrations promote a passive sympathy, and they distance their audiences from the possibility of similar transgressions having gone on in the past, present, or future. The disjuncture between history and the present does not make clear the relationship between historical governments and legislation and contemporary laws. While it was part of the redress agenda to have laws changed in order to prevent similar injustices being enacted in future, the contained narratives of "internment" avoid the polemics of repeating history.

What is frightening is that the possibility for the state to assert power over the individual still exists. Sunahara pointed out at the *Spirit of Redress Conference* in May 1987 that the Charter of Rights provides no protection to citizens during times of emergency, and the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* created a dangerous precedent for how the country would act in future. However, before the redress settlement was negotiated the following year, the Japanese Canadian redress committee's desires to protect citizens against future human rights violations were pre-emptively made obsolete:

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[164] Japanese Canadians were treated most harshly, and the attempts to erase their existence were more rigorous mainly because of the liquidation of their property, and the absolute displacement of the community across Canada and to Japan. However, German Canadian and Italian Canadian families (in lesser numbers) suffered some of the same repercussions of the wartime incarceration of members of their families and communities. These communities also suffered from shame and had a strong desire to integrate in the post-war years.

> During its pursuit of redress, the NAJC had also called on the federal government to rescind the War Measures Act, which had allowed for the victimization of Japanese Canadians solely on the basis of racial categorization. Earlier in 1988, the government had done just that, replacing it with what was called the Emergencies Act (made law in July 1988). (11)

The difference between the Emergencies Act and the War Measures Act is that the 1988 Act is subject to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, after September 11th, 2001 Canada created Anti-Terrorism Laws (Bills C36, C22, C35, C42). It was only a matter of weeks after September 11, 2001, that anti-terrorism legislation became part of the Canadian Criminal Code on December 18, 2001. According to human rights lawyer Rocco Galati, who has been defending non-citizens subject to Security Certificates, these four bills in combination undermine every human right that has been established over the last several hundred years under Western legal systems. In his speech entitled "New Anti-Terrorist Laws Create Tendency Towards 'Orwellian 1984' Police States," Galati argues that the foundations of our legal system and our Charter of Rights have been decimated by these four bills and that Canada has subsequently transformed itself into a military state:

> There is not one single right in the Charter that has been developed from the Magna Carta to the English Bill of Rights, to the French declaration of the Rights of Man, to the U.S. Bill of Rights, to the U.N. Charter, to the Canadian Bill of Rights, and to our Charter that has not been urinated upon and buried. There is not one right that it does not completely undo. You name me the right and I will tell you how it does it.

Any notion that the country remains a democracy is in fact an illusion in post-September 11 Canada. Later, Bill C-42 was replaced by Bill C-55 called the Public Safety Act, which offers no protection of Canadian civil liberties and democratic processes. In addition to the many freedoms this Act allows the government, one interesting and ironic fact is that the Public Safety Act allows the Transportation Minister the power to declare an emergency under the Aeronautics Act; in 2002 the Transportation Minister with the power to declare an emergency, and also to whom dissatisfied constituents could address their letters of complaint was The Honourable David M. Collenette, the self-same Multiculturalism Minister under Mulroney in 1984, who had little sympathy or desire to negotiate with the National Association of Japanese Canadians. Additionally, the government has passed the Security of Information Act, which allows them to control the nation without having to reveal their actions. The secrecy surrounding government/military/police activity means that Canadians cannot know how many Muslims or Other non-citizens may be detained in Canada with Security Certificates issued under the *Immigration and Refugee Act*. These Certificates allow the government to detain "suspected terrorists" without charging them, which also means that without knowing their crime they are unable to create a viable defence. Amnesty International has brought the cases of several men to the fore: Mohmoud Jaballah, Mohamed Zeki Mahjoub, Hassan Almrei, Mohamed Harkat, and Adil Charkaoui. However, there is no way of knowing if there are other Muslims detained in Canada presently, because of the secrecy allowed under the Security of Information Act. Then, there is Canada's apparent complicity in the out-sourcing of torture, brought to the attention of the media by the Maher Arar case. In the case of Arar, American officials deported a Canadian citizen, utilizing a Canadian passport, to the country of his birth – Syria – a country also known for extensive human rights abuses.

The Other has changed but the grammar of oppression remains the same. Effectively, the historical terms "Enemy Alien" and "Yellow Peril" have been transformed and now similar fears are evoked and unjust laws are invoked when the terms "fundamentalist," "terrorist," or simply "Muslim" are uttered. "Internment," too, exists in the present, with other names such as "detainment." "Repatriation" is more blatantly called "deportation" and Security Certificates allow Canadian authorities to target visitors, refugees, and permanent residents in Canada. The vocabulary has changed, but the semantics are consistent. Legal and historical experts are easily able to draw the connections between the historical events of the Japanese Canadian *evacuation* from the West Coast and the treatment of Muslim men in Canada post-September 11, 2001. However, the general population at best responds to the similarities with passive sympathy, especially when the narratives (whether authored by dominant-minorities or ethno-cultural minorities) enforce the progress of Japanese Canadians and Multicultural Canadian society. The various narrations of *evacuation* that have focused predominantly on recording the historical transgressions of the wartime government have one of several goals depending on the author/screenplay-director's political agenda: to make a historical record of the failings of the pre-Multicultural government's transgressions, to gain redress, and to record a vanishing ethno-cultural past.

These narratives become formulaic in that they reiterate events within the survival-success paradigm where Japanese Canadians were wronged by the historical government but were far too noble to react with outrage and bitterness, choosing instead to assimilate as model minority citizens who are "more Canadian" all the time, as Irene Tsuyuki claims in *Watari Dori: Bird of Passage*. These narratives fail to add nuance to the history of lived experience of ethno-cultural persons and identities within Multicultural Canada, because as opposed to highlighting the difficulties of living as one of the non-dominant cultural minorities, these films glorify the assimilation of ethno-cultural citizens into the English-French nation. This is the case with series programs, such as Canada Vignettes, Mother Tongue, A Scattering of Seeds and films such as *The War Between Us.* These Multicultural narratives promote the false promise of unproblematized integration into the socio-economic and political landscape of the Canadian nation. They also historicize ethnicity, in that the futures of these more simple narratives suggest Multicultural assimilation; ethnicity becomes something that was historically problematic but for which younger generations are oblivious. These idealistic narratives of survival and erasure as the definition of successful Multiculturalism are also problematic, because in many cases it is only these educational videos (and a select few CBC productions that are translated into French that) are available. *Watari Dori: Bird of Passage* is available in *French as Watari Dori: Un oiseau migrateur. The Travelling Reverend* is available as *Le reverend voyageur*, just as many of the Multicultural narratives in that series: A Scattering of Seeds: The Creation of Canada available in French as Mémoires d'un pays. While Japanese Canadians have the "*best* documented abuse of human rights in Canada" most of that documentation has been done in English, which leaves little legacy in French Canada about the historical abuses of power by the federal government, or the integration of Japanese Canadians into the French narrative of nation (R. Miki and C. Kobayashi, *Spirit* 29). These educational films produced with Multicultural funds and production agendas for distribution in schools and broadcast on Canadian television catalyze little.

Nevertheless, there are some texts that challenge the Multicultural agenda. In response, some Japanese Canadian innovators have presented Japanese Canadian cinematic autobiographies, biographies, dramatic films, short stories, and novels that unveil complex motivations for Japanese immigration to Canada, varying reasons for settlement, different relationships to Canada and Japan, multi-faceted reactions to wartime and post-war policies, varying attitudes towards redress, and respectively diverse relationships to the identity "Japanese Canadian." The most successful Japanese Canadian authored texts (both literary and cinematic) do not focus solely on *evacuation*, which is only one moment in the national history that has specifically impacted Japanese Canadians. Kogawa was the first innovator, but her debut novel *Obasan* has suffered a certain degree of recuperation as an "internment" story despite the fact that it narrates a polyphonic and nuanced version of re-membering internment. Still, it remains the palimpsest over which all other texts by Japanese Canadians are written and compared. Onodera's *The Displaced View* offers a polyphonic, bi-lingual, tri-generation discourse on Japanese Canadian identity and individual rights in relationship to Multicultural pressures to belong and assimilate. Ohama's *Obāchan's Garden* also adds subtle variances to the community narrative by emphasizing Obāchan's humanity, the fact that she was not necessarily a good mother but her emotional detachment from her children in Canada was predicated by the loss of three children in Japan. The film also emphasizes the lasting bonds between the issei and Japan. Obāchan's loyalties clearly reside with the Emperor for personal reasons that do not preclude the political. Her relationship to politics, however, is very personal in so far as the bombing of Hiroshima is concerned. The film uncovers parts of the matriarch's biography, which are also the family history and the community history, since Obāchan is the family's Japanese-ness. For Obāchan *evacuation* is only one moment in her life that is very likely more meaningful for her nisei children and/or sansei grandchildren. Her life, which reflects the history of Japanese immigration to and settlement in Canada, involves many other transitional moments of importance. Then, there are Kerri Sakamoto's many innovative short-stories, novels, and screenplays which explore issues of identities, sometimes in relationship to nation (Canada and/or America) and sometimes in relationship to internment. Sakamoto dares to reassess Japanese Canadian identity should Multiculturalism absorb Japanese Canadian history and its potential futures. Furthermore, Sakamoto dares to add nuance to the characterizations of Japanese

Canadians through historical fictions, which provoke a strong reaction not only because of the characters she narrates, but because in the post-September 2001 era Canadians do not want to be challenged with complexities of history that would force the nation to move away from contemporary legislations that allow for similar injustices in the contemporary, for which the nation presently narrates as historical aberration. The nisei kamikaze in *One Hundred Million Hearts* are provocative characters who challenge the reader to contemplate the loyalty expected of ethno-cultural individuals who are consistently excluded from belonging to Canadian social, political, and cultural paradigms. Japanese Canadians *post-redress* have again been recuperated as model minority citizens and are therefore in a viable position to stand as synecdoche for what is transpiring in the contemporary Canadian nation in relationship to Muslim-Canadians and non-citizens, who are "suspected terrorists" in the post-September 11 world.

Innovative *post-inter(n)ment* texts challenge the status quo maintained by a Multicultural paradigm that allows for little maintenance of culture beyond a spectacle of Multiculturalism within the private-social sphere, not a public-political-linguistic space. These texts do not challenge Multiculturalism by offering optimistic solutions, but rather by highlighting the polemics of ethno-cultural citizenship within a bi-lingual nation with no official culture. Sakamoto's *The Electrical Field* ends on a melancholy note suggesting that Stum is the most well-adjusted character because he knows little about internment, is dating and has the possibility to procreate with his Filipino girlfriend, and has become an extension of Multicultural values symbolized by his elimination of the hermaphroditic chicks. He kills those chicks who create a third space not permitted by the gender dichotomy of male-female, which is symbolic of the English-French paradigm. There is no space in the white English-French paradigm for the ethno-cultural citizen, especially the visible minority. Despite the pessimism of the ending of the novel, the novel itself undermines it own authorial project by presenting the ending as a warning about what is and what will result from not heeding the call for change.

Japanese Canadians narrations are creating (with varying degrees of success) narratives of Japanese Canadian identity that resist erasure. The successful narratives respond to the historical gaze of the dominant discourse by narrating personal and communal autobiographies that resist the metanarratives of Japanese Canadian identities as either victim-survivors or model citizens. *Obasan*, *The Displaced View*, *The Electrical Field*, *Obāchan's Garden*, and *One Hundred Million Hearts* all emphasize the fallability of historical absolutes and re-invent family histories in the place of loss and silence. Despite the fact that these narratives are all relatively open-ended and not necessarily optimistic, the act of writing and creating is in itself a positive act. Sakamoto says that she believes "writing is a hopeful act. And it's a very active thing. If you don't believe that change can come about, you won't write" (Tihanyi 2). Whether the texts produced will be received and evaluated within their socio-political contexts as innovative contributions to Japanese Canadian and ethno-cultural Canadian discourses on identity and history is one measure of success. The other is a simply the maintenance of a dialogue that challenges the status quo. As René Girard argues in *The Scapegoat*, the victors cannot forever control the narratives of history:

> During the course of Western history representations of persecution from the persecutor's perspective gradually weaken and disappear. There are not necessarily fewer or less intense acts of violence, but it does mean that the persecutors could no longer permanently impose their own perspective on those around them. Centuries were needed to demystify medieval persecutions; a few years suffice to discredit contemporary persecutors. Even if some totalitarian system were to control the entire planet tomorrow, it would not succeed in making its own myth, or the magical aspect of its persecution, prevail. The process is the same as for the Christian martyrs, but it has been cleansed of the last traces of the sacred and radicalized since it demands no community of belief the victims and those who demystify the system of their persecution. This is evident in the language that is always used in preference to any other. (201-2).

Vigilance becomes, then, one definition of resistance, and some Japanese Canadians are insufficiently aware of the recuperation of their own family stories. One example is the fact that the 1945 propaganda film -- *of Japanese Descent*, bears disturbing similarities with the 2005 film *Kimiko Murakami: Triumph Over Internment*, part of the Mother Tongue Series, which are the two narratives that bookend the temporal span of this study. Interspersed are narratives that provide greater nuance and resist these more formulaic narratives of survival in the face of adversity. Another issue not addressed in this thesis, but which is becoming increasingly necessary, is that Japanese Canadian identity in Canada has been narrated almost solely around *evacuation* in a politically astute move to integrate Japanese Canadians into the pioneer narrative of the country, instead of solely into the victim survivor narrative. Nevertheless, as the generations since pre-war immigration increase, there are more and more post-war Japanese Canadians. Here, too, is a space to negotiate another Japanese Canadian identity. Sally Ito and Hiromi Goto have already received critical acclaim for their stories that do not focus on Japanese Canadian internment, but that highlight issues relevant to more recent immigrants which usually revolve more specifically around issues of identity. Hiromi Goto narrates Japanese Canadian stories set in the Canadian landscape, imbued with folkloric and mythic Japanese characters. There are vast numbers of Japanese Canadians who as post-Second-World-War immigrants have no familial link to internment and who will forge an identity independent of internment and redress, no less Japanese Canadian than the one that has already been narrated.

Regardless of the moment of immigration, and the specific histories of the protagonists, Japanese Canadian authors (literary or cinematic) are engaged in the constant renegotiation to maintain hegemony over Japanese Canadian identities. Innovative reiterations attempt to prevent the Multicultural narrative from recuperating Japanese Canadian identities as simplified narrative that contribute to the myth of the Canadian Multicultural mosaic. As the most well-documented and human rights abuse, with the longest and largest legacy of cultural product, Japanese Canadian history also stands as a paradigm for what can be accomplished.

In power, the federal "Liberals have increasingly emphasized multiculturalism as a way to deal with global markets and global competitiveness" (Abu-Laban and

Gabriel 116). The Middle East is the economic enemy, holding its oil hostage, and China offers the hope of economic profitability. Muslims or anyone who appears Muslim has become Enemy Alien and Chinese immigrants and Chinese Canadians have become a hot commodity, which was recently acknowledged through the redress settlement over the Chinese Head Tax. The goal for these other ethno-cultural groups, each at different historical moments in their own ethno-cultural history in relationship to national power-dynamics, is to resist the status of model minority or Other, and to attempt to negotiate a third space that will undermine the binary systems that maintain white Canada. That third space will ideally undermine Multiculturalism as a modern tribalism that fractures Canadian society sufficiently to control it.

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Appendix A: Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement, September 22, 1988[165]

Terms of Agreement Between the Government of Canada And National Association of Japanese Canadians

As a people, Canadians commit themselves to the creation of a society that ensures equality and justice for all, regardless of race or ethnic origin.

During and after World War II, Canadians of Japanese ancestry, the majority of whom were citizens, suffered unprecedented actions taken by the Government of Canada against their community.

Despite perceived military necessities at the time, the forced removal and internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II and their deportation and expulsion following the war, was unjust. In retrospect, government policies of disenfranchisement, detention, confiscation and sale of private and community property, expulsion, deportation and restriction of movement, which continued after the war, were influenced by discriminatory attitudes. Japanese Canadians who were interned had their property liquidated and the proceeds of sale were used to pay for their own internment.

The acknowledgement of these injustices serves notice to all Canadians that the excesses of the past are condemned and that the principles of justice and equality in Canada are reaffirmed.

Therefore, the Government of Canada, on behalf o all Canadians, does hereby:

1. Acknowledge that the treatment of Japanese Canadians during and after World War II was unjust and violated principles of human rights as they are understood today;

2. Pledge to ensure, to the full extent that its powers allow, that such events will not happen again; and

3. Recognize, with great respect, the fortitude and determination of Japanese Canadians who, despite great stress and hardship, retain their commitment and

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[165] This appendix is taken from A. Miki's book *The Japanese Canadian Redress Legacy: A Community Revitalized*, pp 178-9.

loyalty to Canada and contribute so richly to the development of Canadian nation.

As symbolic redress for those injustices, the Government offer:

a) $21,000 individual redress, subject to application by eligible persons of Japanese ancestry who, during this period, were subjected to internment, relocation, deportation, loss of property or otherwise deprived of the full enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms based solely on the fact that they were of Japanese ancestry; each payment would be made in a tax-free sum, as expeditiously as possible;

b) $12 million to the Japanese Canadian community, through the National Association of Japanese Canadians, to undertake educational, social and cultural activities or programmes that contribute to the well-being of the Community or that promote human rights;

c) $12 million, on behalf of Japanese Canadians and in commemoration of those who suffered these injustices, and matched by a further $12 million from the Government of Canada, for the creation of a Canadian Race Relations Foundation that will foster racial harmony and cross-cultural understanding and help to eliminate racism;

d) Subject to application by eligible persons, to clear the names of persons of Japanese ancestry who were convicted of violations under the War Measures Act and the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act.

e) Subject to application by eligible persons, to grant Canadian citizenship to persons of Japanese ancestry still living who were expelled from Canada or had their citizenship revoked during the period 1941 to 1949, and to their living descendants;

f) To provide, through contractual arrangements, up to $3 million to the National Association of Japanese Canadians for their assistance, including community liaison, in administration of redress over the period of implementation.

Only persons alive at the date of the signing of the Terms of Agreement would be entitled to the redress in paragraph (a), (d), and (e) except that the redress in (e) would also apply to descendants living at that date.